

The Academy

A Weekly Review of Literature and Life.

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The Literary Week.

Books about the War come into this office with the frequency of shells in a besieged town. Following a score or so that we have already reviewed, to-day Mr. Pearse, of the *Daily News*, gives us a book; to-morrow Mr. Nevinston, of the *Chronicle*; the day after to-morrow Mr. Winston Churchill. The war-book business, like everything else, is being overdone. Within a week the rights of no fewer than twenty-five books about the War were offered to one American publisher. We are also to have a volume from the Bishop of Natal, who was at the Front with General Buller. It is in the form of a diary, and was written for the benefit of his friends; but "the urgent needs of his diocese have induced him to consent to their publication." The Bishop of Natal is a sanguine man. We wish him and his diary good fortune.

MR. CONAN DOYLE, we understand, has accepted the offer of an American firm of publishers to write a history of the Boer War.

MESSRS. METHUEN are preparing a sixpenny edition of Colonel Baden-Powell's personal narrative of the Matabele Campaign of 1896. The book, which is dedicated to his mother, has been illustrated by Colonel Baden-Powell with numerous and characteristic sketches.

MRS. MEYNELL has been appointed art critic of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, in succession to R. A. M. S. Mr. W. E. Henley has written for the new number of the *Pall Mall Magazine* an appreciation of Mr. R. A. M. Stevenson.

CHANGES have taken place in the editorial department of the *Speaker*. Mr. Philip Carr, we understand, has retired from the editorship, which he shared jointly with Mr. J. L. Hammond.

THE work of reconstruction which has been in progress for some time in the publishing house of Harper & Brothers is now practically complete. The London branch in Albemarle-street has been placed under the control of Mr. W. B. Fitts, who is known in England by his work in connexion with the new series of the *North American Review*. Mr. E. V. Lucas has joined Messrs. Harper & Brothers as reader and literary adviser.

MR. ANTHONY HOPE is writing three more "Dolly Dialogues," which will be published in the *New Magazine*, an American periodical of which the first number is announced to appear shortly.

A SIXPENNY edition of John Oliver Hobbes's *The School for Saints* will be issued by Mr. Fisher Unwin at an early date.

IN the report made by Edward Edwards on the first year's working of the Manchester Free Library (1852-53) it is interesting to read his remarks on the popular

reading of that day. He enumerates some of the works most in demand in both the Reference and the Lending Departments, and the list of titles makes a curious contrast with the popular reading of to-day—not entirely to the credit of modern readers. In the Reference Department the Biblical commentaries most in demand were those of Calmet, Kitto, and Beard. The works of Jeremy Taylor, Richard Hooker, Robert Hall, and Bishop Horsley had been much read. During the first six months of the year, Hume and Smollett's *History of England* was issued 31 times; Lingard's, 41 times; Craik and Macfarlane's, 60 times; and Macaulay's 124 times. Cumming's *Hunter's Life in South Africa* was applied for nearly 200 times; Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast*, 74 times; and Layard's *Nineveh and its Remains* about as often. Biography was popular; and for a *Life of Wellington*, and the great Duke's *Despatches*, there were 122 calls. Various Lives of Napoleon had a total of 303 readers. Shakespeare's works, and books illustrative thereof, reached the respectable total of 324 issues; while in the realm of fiction, Scott and Defoe reigned supreme, there having been 1,141 issues of the former and 984 of the latter: *Ivanhoe* being issued 241 times, and *Robinson Crusoe*, 239. *The Thousand and One Nights* delighted 294 readers, *Gulliver's Travels* left the shelves 123 times, and *Roderick Random* had 82 issues.

TURNING to the parallel six months in the Lending Department, we find that the same problem troubled the librarian of those days as now—viz., the great preponderance of fiction-reading. Dickens's *The Chimes* was borrowed 42 times; *Oliver Twist*, 30; and *Dombey and Son*, 20 times. Scott's *Kenilworth* was issued 34 times; *Peveril of the Peak*, 31; and *The Fortunes of Nigel*, 34 times. *Vanity Fair* was taken out 30 times; *Pelham*, 33 times; while the now forgotten Sewall's *Rudolph the Voyager* found 36 readers. "But," says the librarian, "of such works as these, four or five times the number of copies which the library possesses would be in equally eager demand were they forthcoming." The first volume of Whitaker's *History of Manchester* was borrowed 21 times, but the second reversed the figures, being issued only 12 times. Macaulay's *History* found 20 students. Fifteen issues were recorded of the early volumes of Lingard's *History*; but the perseverance of many of the readers evidently broke down, for when the ninth volume was reached they numbered but 10, the tenth totalled 7, and the thirteenth only 3. Clarendon's *History* found 14 readers for the first and second volumes, but the seventh volume reduced that number to 3.

WE stated some weeks ago that the scene of Mr. Kipling's new novel is laid in Upper Burmah. The first draft of the story, we gather from the *New York Bookman*, was given to the printers in England before Mr. Kipling's departure for South Africa. In its original form it made about one hundred thousand words. The proofs were forwarded to Mr. Kipling at the scene of the war, and the author was obliged to make his corrections and alterations under trying and picturesque circumstances.

How quickly truth becomes elusive, and myth pervasive! Was it truth or myth—that Norfolk landlord's character-sketch of George Borrow which Mr. Lowerison communicated last week to the *Daily Chronicle*? Mr. William Mackay, writing from Oulton Broad, the scene of Mr. Lowerison's interview, scouts the whole story. Our readers must judge between the twain:

MR. LOWERISON IN THE *Daily Chronicle*, APRIL 30.

The landlord of the Ferry Inn at Oulton Broad knew George Borrow very well. I remember five years ago asking him how he liked the author of *Lavengro*.

"Didn't like him at all," was the gruff response.

"At least," I said, "he was a scholar and a gentleman."

"Scholar be d—," replied Boniface, "an' gentleman he weren't; never came into my bar but he quarrelled with everyone there, and cracked 'em out to fight. An' when he weren't fighting himself he were egg'in' others on to."

And that was George Borrow.

But all the same I'll e'en take down the *Romany Rye* and talk with the gipsies ere I sleep to night.

MR. MACKAY, IN THE *Daily Chronicle*, MAY 9.

He [Mr. Lowerison] discovered at the Ferry Inn "a landlord who knew Borrow very well." There is no inn of that name at Oulton Broad. But the landlord of the Wherry Hotel—which is doubtless the hostelry Mr. Lowerison has in his mind—did not know Borrow "very well." I also had tapped that barrel, but obtained from it nothing stimulating. The landlord's name was Mason—he died a twelvemonth ago—and he has often told me that Borrow had not "used" his house twice during all the years through which they had been neighbours. All Mr. Lowerison's story, therefore, about Borrow quarrelling in the bar, fighting himself and egging others on to fight, is pure romance.

Your correspondent has evidently encountered someone who impersonated the landlord of the Wherry; someone who appears to have been as great a poseur and as flamboyant a prevaricator as Mr. George Borrow himself. This theory finds support in the fact that the real landlord of the Wherry did not swear, and did not converse in a sort of bastard dialect impossible to locate. The late Mr. Mason was a Londoner, an intelligent and widely-read man with considerable literary tastes.

MR. ROBERT H. SHERRARD writes some interesting things about his friend, the late Mr. Ernest Dowson, in the current *Author*. Mr. Sherrard sheltered Dowson in the last six weeks of his unhappy life, and his account of the young poet's last literary enjoyments comes somewhat as a surprise:

He glutted himself on Dickens, and I had also an *Esmond*, by Thackeray, to put into his gaunt hands. He had *Esmond* in his bed, by the way, when he died. But as to Dickens, here was a perfect stylist and most laborious artist who delighted himself for the last precious days of a short life in the hasty writings, but perfect humanity, of our English Balzac.

And I shall never take up an *Oliver Twist* again without remembering these circumstances: Five hours before Ernest Dowson died I was lying on a couch in a room adjoining his, keeping myself awake at six o'clock in the morning with the adventures of that most smug of prigs, so as to keep converse with my friend, who could not get to sleep, and who had begged me to talk to him. I happened to say to him, to show that I was vigilant: "How absurdly melodramatic this is, about the murder of Nancy. Do you think that, for anything Fagin could tell him, Sikes, who knew Fagin to be the worst liar on earth, would have killed his missus?"

"No," said Dowson; "he would have gone for Claypole." And that was the last thing on literature that he ever said.

FRANCIS DOUCE's box at the British Museum has been opened at last, and its contents are said to be of no value to anybody. The British Museum authorities had never set very high hopes on the box, as it was known that Douce had left all his finest manuscripts to the Bodleian Library.

MR. GEORGE GISSING is one of those novelists about whom the best of friends are apt to disagree. You like his novels or you don't. But it is surely a symptom of Mr. Gissing's worth that books which he wrote many years ago are continually being referred to by admiring readers as not having received their due. Thus in some remarks on Grub-street—the Grub-street that was, and is, and will be—the *American Bookman* remarks that Mr. Gissing's novel *New Grub Street* "has not one tithe of the recognition it deserves," while in the *May National Review* Miss Jane H. Findlater writes of Mr. Gissing's *The Nether World* as a novel that is "deserving of more fame than it ever got." If there are arrears of fame due to Mr. Gissing it is very certain that they will be paid, with interest, at some future date.

MISS FINDLATER's tribute to Mr. Gissing occurs in a very readable article on "The Slum Movement in Fiction." The pedigree of the modern slum novel as traced by Miss Findlater is briefly this:

Charles Dickens (*Oliver Twist*).

Charles Kingsley (*Alton Locke*).

George Gissing (*The Nether World*).

Rudyard Kipling (*Badalia Herodsfoot*).

Arthur Morrison (*Tales of Mean Streets*).

W. S. Maugham (*Liza of Lambeth*).

W. Pett Ridge (*Mord Em'ly*).

Clarence Rook (*The Hooligan Nights*).

Miss Findlater thinks that *Badalia Herodsfoot* gave the present "brutal school" its present life and activity. In *Liza of Lambeth* the brutality reached its depths, and what was needed was work more artistic and less horribly powerful. The needed relief came in Mr. Pett Ridge's *Mord Em'ly* and Mr. Clarence Rook's *The Hooligan Nights*. "To my thinking," says Miss Findlater,

these latest contributions to slum literature are probably more near the truth in their picture of slum-life than any of their predecessors, yet it may be seriously questioned whether all attempts in this sort are not vain. The gulf that separates the educated man and woman from the uneducated is curiously difficult to bridge. We may believe as firmly as we like that we are brothers or sisters "under our skin," yet remain in heathen ignorance all the while of the real truth about each other. What we mutually see must always be only the surface of things, and anything beyond that no more than clever conjecture. Let us say, then, that the probabilities seem to be with the latest contributors! They avoid successfully the weak points where their predecessors have broken down, are not too moral, or too boring about reform; or too hopelessly tragical, or too desperately brutal; they take, in fact, the middle road of proverb with good results.

The survey will do, but Miss Findlater makes one serious omission. Mr. George Moore's *Esther Waters* combines the darker and the lighter sides of slum life, and is, in any case, a most remarkable work of the class she is considering.

BOETHIUS' *Consolations of Philosophy* is a book which Englishmen should not "willingly let die." The favourite philosophical work of the Middle Ages, it found a royal lover and editor in King Alfred, who, with the aid of

Asser, gave to his subjects a fine though free rendering of this work by "the last of the Romans whom Cato or Tully would have acknowledged for their countryman." Last year Mr. Walter John Sedgfield gave us a scholarly edition of King Alfred's Old English version of this remarkable book. He now gives us, through the Clarendon Press, the same version rendered into modern English. In doing this it has been Mr. Sedgfield's care to preserve that curiously refreshing personal note which Alfred infused into his version, "the making of which was to Alfred a love's labour." Mr. Sedgfield's preface continues:

It satisfied his intellectual cravings and stimulated his uncultured but vigorous mind, and he resolved to give his still more unlettered lieges a share in the treat. So he turned it into his own tongue, as the King of the West Saxons might be expected to do, in a large and royal way, scattering up and down the work such notes and comments as he judged needful. His *Boethius* heads the roll of English philosophical writings; it likewise heads the roll of English translations. It is hoped that the modern English dress here given to the king's best book will help to make him less an unsubstantial shadow for Englishmen of to-day, and more a real man, practical, right-feeling, and earnest beyond his generation.

THE supremacy of the Novel is discussed by Mr. Andrew Lang in the *Westminster Gazette*. Mr. Lang finds that in 1830 Bulwer Lytton wrote of the novel in terms which might be used to-day. In his Dedicatory Epistle to *Paul Clifford* Lytton explains why he writes novels. "Will you—will anyone—read epic or sonnet, tale or satire, tragedy or epigram? . . . Then, as to philosophy, we may judge of the demand when we reflect that Hobbes's works are out of print, and that Mill's *Analysis* has not been reviewed. . . . All books, except novels, are now ephemeral far more than are writings in fiction. Does the biography or the essay or the treatise last even the year for which the novel endures? . . . We live in a strange and ominous period for literature. . . . The idlest work is the most charming. . . . We throw aside our profound researches, and feast upon popular abridgments. . . . Readers now look into fiction for facts. . . . Thus in the wreck of much that is great and noble paths are open to second-rate ability and mediocre knowledge." Mr. Lang is careful to point out that Fiction did not enjoy undisputed sway for long after 1830. The poetry of Tennyson, the histories of Macaulay and Froude, and the philosophy of Darwin and Ruskin, soon redressed the balance. "Thus," says Mr. Lang, "if any author feels that he has in him the powers of a Macaulay, a Tennyson, a Froude, a Darwin, or a Ruskin, he may, without too much diffidence, write history, poetry, philosophy, or essays on art. The less gifted or less confident men of the pen are driven back, like Lytton, on the novel, and let us hope that their romances will be no worse than his."

MEANWHILE, the young novelist of our day is possibly working on wrong lines. The qualities on which he prides himself most are his veracity and vigilance. To see everything, and record it truly, is, he thinks, essential to his art. He revels in what he calls "vision." To make the reader see a great deal of detail with absolute clearness is constantly his labour. A writer in the *Atlantic Review* confesses that this labour is lost on him. When the illusion of a modern novel is at its height, he has "an instinctive craving for the disentangling of the essential from the superfluous, for enfranchisement from the tyranny of accessories." Probably few readers with a fine critical sense have not felt the same impatience of superfluously wrought detail, especially in the novels on which the adjective "powerful" is bestowed with a flowing pen. The writer continues:

If we consider, I venture to say, we shall find that we know the faces of none of the characters of the great

fiction of the past as we know, or may know, those of the brain-children of the typical latter-day novelist—not even Beatrice Esmond, not Don Quixote himself. Nor are we made aware of any very minutely distinguishing traits, mental or physical, pertaining to them. Radiant, heroic, grotesque, repellent, as the case may be, they are satisfyingly apparent, sufficiently real, but they are a little removed from us; their outlines are slightly indefinite, like those of a composite picture. Perhaps, indeed, we never lose the latent consciousness that they are composite pictures—that each is not one, but many. Certainly, I have never had, while setting myself to learn their life histories, the vague feeling of unworthiness which one has in listening to gossip about one's neighbours—as I have had more than once in the case of the scrupulously individualised heroes and heroines and satellites of to-day. And never have Rosalind, Hamlet, the deathless Don—nor even Becky Sharp and Mrs. Gamp—harassed me by their presence!

THE *American Bookman's* latest list of best selling books:

1. *To Have and to Hold*. Johnston.
2. *Red Pottage*. Cholmondeley.
3. *Janice Meredith*. Ford.
4. *When Knighthood was in Flower*. Caskoden.
5. { *Richard Carvel*. Churchill.
- { *The Gentleman from Indiana*. Tarkington.
6. *Resurrection*. Tolstoy.

CHICAGO is already associated in the minds of Englishmen with scientific slaughter. We are afraid that its treatment of the English language suggests similar ideas. The spelling reform which is there making such rapid progress has brought about the adoption of spellings which we contemplate with a shudder. Final e's are to be dropped "in words in which they do not serv to lengthen the preceding vowel, but rather tend to mislead the learner; thus—spel, hav, giv, ar, bad (verb), definit, derivativ, amiabl, &c." "F" is to be substituted for "ph" and "gh"; thus—geografy, fantasm, and enuf. Other typical new spellings are: Coud, sovran, foren, hole (entire), iland, gastly, &c. On these Dr. Funk, editor-in-chief of the *Standard Dictionary*, comments favourably, as follows:

It is inevitable as the law of gravity that silent letters—that is, letters that have outlived their significance and are now but dead weight—be dropt out of words. Progress is along the line of least resistance, and in spelling the phonetic is surely that line; a distinct sign for every distinct sound. We have already come a great way. Just note some of the spellings that our great-grandfathers had to put up with, and let us be glad that we live to-day. This is the way they spelt in Shakespeare's time:

Ayre (air), beleene (believe), civill (civil), cuppe (cup), diene (devil), duckoy (decoy), farre (far), fysche (fish), horrour (horror), musick (music), sunne (sun), souldiers (soldiers), trewe (true), wiefe (wife).

We agree that progress has been made since Shakespeare's time, but it has been a progress free, natural, and gracious. Speech belongs to the mind and body, and should partake of their slow change and growth. New spellings should be initiated by writers, not by schoolmasters and lexicographers. Your spelling reformer will make night and knight indistinguishable to the eye. Veil and vale; sent, cent, and scent; by, bye, and buy will all lose their visual identity under the "fonetik" scheme. This would be calamitous from a literary point of view.

A DELIGHTFUL picture of one of Edward Fitzgerald's hospitable evenings at his cottage at Boulge in 1845 is contained in a letter written by Bernard Barton, Fitzgerald's father-in-law, to John Wodderspoon, the author of *Memorials of Ipswich*. The letter from which we are about to quote is one of a large batch written by Barton to Wodderspoon, which has lately come into the hands of

an Ipswich bookseller. These letters date from 1843 to 1849, and their contents are very varied. Writing on January 15, 1845, Barton gives this picture of FitzGerald as a host:

Tom Churchyard drove me last night to a symposium given by Edward FitzGerald to us two and Old Crabbe—lots of palaver, smoking, and laughing. My head swims yet with the fumes of the baccy, and my sides are sore with laughing. Edward was in one of his drollest cues, and did the honours of his cottage with such gravity of humour that we roared again. It was the oddest *melange*. Tea, porter, ale, wine, brandy, cigars, cold lamb, salad, cucumber, bread and cheese; no precise line of demarcation between tea and supper. It was one continuous spread, something coming on fresh every ten minutes till we wondered whence they came and whither they could be put. "Gentlemen, the resources of the cottage are exhaustless," shouted our host. "Miss Faiers, the salad there, the cucumber here, oil at that corner, vinegar and pepper yonder; there put the cream, and that glass of butter in the middle, push those wine and brandy bottles close together"—certainly, it was rare fun.

Bibliographical.

WRITING in the *Daily Express* the other day, Mr. Clement Scott referred to the fact that when he was editor of the *Theatre* magazine one of his contributors was Miss Marie Corelli. Those who are interested in Miss Corelli's work outside the limits of fiction may like to know that her articles in Mr. Scott's miscellany appear to have begun in 1883 with an account of "A Fair Enthusiast" (for Wagner), followed in the same year by a paper on "Joachim and Sarasate" and a sketch of "A Girl Graduate." In 1884 came "His Big Friend" (an *éloge* of Hollman, the violin-cellist). In January, 1885, appeared a description of an "improvisation" (on the pianoforte) given by Miss Corelli at a house in Harley-street. "Her touch is brilliant, and her execution marvellous," wrote the appreciative reporter. Then in the February number came four stanzas of verse addressed to the Princess Beatrice "on her betrothal," after this fashion:

Beatrice, Comfort of England! Young Joy of its people,
Lay by the lilies of maidenhood,—Love is before thee!
Hark to the bells going mad with their mirth in the
steeples!
Cling to the lover who looks in thine eyes to adore thee!
Happiness hallowed thy girlhood, and peace in its perfect
completeness,
Greater delight now awaits thee, and stronger, more
absolute sweetness.
Come from the side of that Throne where the nations in
wonder
Bend to thy Mother's slight hand and acknowledge her
splendour,
She whom the multitudes shout for with voices of thunder,
She who is better than mighty in being so tender!
Pitiful ev'n to the poorest, as compassionate sister to
brother,
Beatrice! well hast thou honoured so noble, so faithful a
mother.

Finally, in 1886, Miss Corelli was represented by fourteen lines on Desdemona, beginning thus:

Draw back the velvet curtains, let the light
Rush wonderingly in! She will not say
The sunbeams dazzle her. . . . Eternal Night
Hath closed for her the portals of the Day.
Look you how fair she is! as fair as when
She smiled on Cassio—prithce where's her wrong?—
One woman, sure, doth smile on many men!

The announcement of a forthcoming new edition of Sir Philip Sidney's sonnets, with hitherto-unprinted matter, is a fresh testimony to the renewed popularity of the hero of Zutphen. There has been quite a run upon Sidney

and his works during the past decade. It began with the memoir which Mr. H. R. Fox Bourne contributed to the "Heroes of the Nations" series in 1891. In 1892 a "Cabinet of Gems" from Sidney's writings made its appearance, followed in 1893 by a reprint of his *Apologie for Poetrie*, a reprint of his *Arcadia*, and an edition of his *Miscellaneous Works*. He was allowed to rest for a year, and then, in 1895, came a pretty little collection of his *Lyric Poems*. In 1897 we had Mr. Grosart's edition of the *Complete Poetical Works* in three volumes (including the verse in the *Arcadia*). Next year appeared Mr. John Gray's edition of the *Sonnets*, with Mr. Ricketts's illustrations, and, finally, last year saw the publication of *Memoirs of the Sidney Family*, from the pen of the gentleman who is now about to give us more of Sidney's verse.

I note that Mr. E. Robins is by and by to be represented by a couple of new volumes—one entitled *Twelve Great Actors*, and the other *Twelve Great Actresses*. Much interested as I am in the literature of the stage, this particular announcement is one about which I feel unable to "enthuse." Mr. Robins, who is, I believe, an American cousin, is already known in this country as the author of *Echoes of the Playhouse: Reminiscences of Past Glories* (1895), and of *The Palmy Days of Nance Oldfield* (1898), neither of them very much more than collections of more or less readable gossip.

It is, again, a little disappointing to find that the volume on *The Manchester Stage*, for which we are told to look, is confined in scope to the last twenty years. The story of the Manchester stage is well worth telling at some length, as it is of real interest and value to playgoers. It was in Cottonopolis that Charles Calvert started most if not all, of his excellent Shakespearean revivals, and it was in the same city that Henry Irving first gave earnest of his exceptional ability as an actor. Something about the Birmingham stage has been written by Mr. T. E. Pemberton; and the same office has been done for Bath by Mr. Penley, for Edinburgh by Mr. J. C. Dibdin, for Glasgow by Mr. Walter Baynham, and for Aberdeen by the late Mr. Angus. Even the Dundee stage has had its historian. There is a little book on the Brighton stage; but, unless I am much mistaken, the theatrical history of Liverpool, Sheffield, Leeds, Bristol, and other leading centres in England, has either been altogether neglected or else very inadequately treated.

A Yale professor has written a book on *The Mind of Tennyson*, which, I suppose, will soon be accessible in England. Singularly enough, America (so far as I know) has not done much in the way of Tennysonian criticism. For the moment I can think only of Stedman's essay in his *Victorian Poets* and of Mr. Van Dyke's *Poetry of Tennyson*, which came to us, originally, ten years ago, but has since been revised and reproduced. We shall see what the Yale professor gives us; but, in the meantime, the States have yet to furnish us with "appreciations" of our great poet which can be named in the same breath with those of George Brimley, W. C. Roscoe, R. H. Hutton, Stopford Brooke, and Frederic Harrison.

The idea, which has occurred to Major Arthur Griffiths, of writing the history of *Famous British Regiments* is good, but not quite novel. I remember very well a little book, published a good many years ago, called *Famous Regiments of the British Army*; but that, of course, must be somewhat out of date. Besides, have there not been changes in regimental nomenclature?

"Do you remember," asks Mr. Arthur Pendenys in his latest letter to Belinda, "that in the burlesque of Lytton's play, 'Money,' Sir Harcourt Courtly figured as Sir Haircut Shortly—one of the best perversions on record?" But, dear Mr. Pendenys, it is in "London Assurance," not in "Money," that Sir Harcourt Courtly figures. And when and where was "Money" ever burlesqued? I can find no record of any travesty of that *démodé* production.

THE BOOKWORM.

Reviews.

A Woman's Hansard.

The International Congress of Women, 1899. Edited by the Countess of Aberdeen. 7 vols. (Unwin. Each 3s. 6d. net.)

UTTERANCE is creative: that is the teaching of Genesis and St. John, it is also the experience of the world; and the utterance of woman—so long delayed—the utterance before mankind of all her sufferings and aspirations in political and industrial life, is creating a new order and new values. Silence, even that which M. Masterlinck applauds with such truth and grace, is but the laboratory of the message for which a heart or a world is waiting. The International Congress of Women of 1899, like the similar gatherings which preceded and which will succeed it, was an utterance born of long and cruel silence. It stated innumerable facts; it suggested remedies for existing evils; it diffused what we may call the cult of sisterhood in humanity; it was a great conception admirably organised. Its result is materialised in seven volumes, and we are able as a consequence to obtain an idea of the value of women as an intellectual force in politics. The volumes have been edited, the parenthetical talk ("Hear, hear," &c.) has been eliminated, but the characteristics of the speakers remain. Let it be said at once that even congresses of women are not free from frivolity. Woman is incurably arch. Said Miss Mabel Hawtrey, for instance: "People, I am told, advocate co-education with a view to promoting the equality of the sexes. Now, this is an object with which I have very little sympathy, as I have no wish to climb down and place myself on an equality with man. I would much rather stay where I am, in the position he has given me, and personally I shall be quite satisfied if he continues to look up to me." This were a suitable remark to put in the mouth of a flirtatious girl in a novel; but it gives a preliminary air of insincerity to a thoughtful speech on co-education from a physiological point of view. Sex-glorification is another regrettable feature of the talk of women in congress. Hear Mrs. Adelaide Johnson in an unfinished and unfinishable sentence on sculpture as a profession for her sex: "And as hitherto woman has never failed in any undertaking whatsoever, but, with fair opportunity in each, has taken the palm, and has purified, dignified, and uplifted every trade, industry, and profession she has entered and embraced—or 'tis truer to say conquered. . . ." The rebutment of imaginary accusations should not occupy women in congress. "It is, or it was," said Miss Carmichael Stopes, "a common masculine dictum, that women have no creative or originitive faculty, no humour, no pathos, no fire, no sustained effort, no accuracy. Had I time I could disprove each charge." And then the good lady goes on to demand: "Who among men has equalled the intensity of Charlotte and Emily Brontë?" This is the kind of thing which a happy exigency of space might have excluded from print. Women, collectively speaking, err in yielding to an innate love of forcible phrase, regardless of accuracy. To the Lady Battersea we owe the curious sentence: "Novels, which, if they do not amuse, are unworthy of their name, do not prevent their authors from being among the best preachers and teachers the world has ever known. . . . Think of Sir W. Scott, Hood. . . . Miss Broughton, and the joint work of Gilbert and Sullivan." The abbreviation "Sir W." gives a special flavour to this apostrophe. The importance of facts, of data, has yet to be learned by the average woman speaker; but that women are capable of mastering the concrete as well as the abstract surface of a question is shown by the valuable contributions of Mrs. J. R. Macdonald to the work of the Congress. Women are naturally fond of platitude, and there was one which fell from the lips of

a fair senatress which deserves to become a classic: "Where equity is, justice cannot be far off."

The pronouncements of the Congress on the subject of literature, journalism, and art will be read with interest. They are, of course, imbued with a moral feeling which rather tempts the rejoinder: "L'art pour l'art." The Duchess of Sutherland almost made an epigram in rebuking women journalists who forgot that "personalities were not character-studies." Mrs. Ida H. Harper stated the remarkable fact that "in Chicago a woman, who has been for many years an editorial writer on one of the large dailies in that city, does the heavy political writing, treating especially the leading questions of tariff and finance," at a salary of 5,000 dols. a year. An excellent principle in co-operative journalism was stated by the same lady. The woman-journalist "must learn to forget that she is a woman when she has to work among men at men's work. I do not mean that she must be unwomanly. . . . But if a man wants to smoke in her presence when she is at work, or keep his hat on, or take his coat off, . . . she must remember that it all goes with the place she is in. . . . Men like womanly women; but still they don't want any 'clinging-vine' business about an office." Miss March Phillips finds that "men write with greater ease and lightness because their work is now brought into close contact with that of women." They should certainly gain much "ease and lightness" if they answered Mrs. Harper's requisition of the woman journalist. "If her own cherished ideas are wholly opposed to those of the managing editor, can she substitute his for her own and present them in the same strong, convincing manner?"

A striking example of an influential editress is cited by Mlle. Drucker. Her French is not classic, so we translate the passage which refers to the weekly organ *De Huisvrouw*. "At the head of this journal was and is still an invisible personality, a woman . . . whose veil is so thick that several people think that the face hidden behind it is that of a man who is afraid of being unmasked and twitted with having concealed himself under a woman's name."

On the subject of romantic literature the most interesting contributions are from foreigners. True, Mrs. Flora Anna Steel says some clever things, such as this: "There is nothing sacred from the stylograph pen, which jots down even your mistakes as 'copy';" but she takes refuge in a crypt from the exactions of her too-comprehensive subject. Mme. Dick May credits Mme. de Lafayette with the creation of the psychological novel. MM. Paul Bourget, Edouard Rod and Marcel Prévost must take off their caps to her. Fraulein von Milde informs us that Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach is Germany's greatest authoress, and that her account of the struggles of a murderer's son "against prejudice, stupidity and malignity" is "the best modern novel we possess either from men or women." Observe the calm omniscience of this remark! Mrs. Heinemann—the cultivated novelist "Kassandra Vivaria"—stimulates a vague interest in various Italian mediocrities whose productiveness amid "the turmoil of intestine wars" was in itself a kind of genius. Finland and Holland offer, it would appear, mines of literary wealth still untapped, and translators on the look out for "tips" cannot do better than consult these Transactions on this subject.

Women have a delightful talent for enthusiasm in branch-subjects. The experiences of a woman as a folk-song collector, given in one of these volumes, is an illustration of what we mean. What man would think of making a "profession" of strolling about asking fishermen *à propos des bottles* to sing him songs? But Mrs. Lee is a folk-song collector who has the courage to present her requests without the preliminary of being "introduced." And because she refrains from introductions, she is reminded "of one I had to a well-known lady, from the charwoman who cleaned for us both, in a country district,

'Oh, Mrs. Lee, I think you ought to know Mrs. Maclaren, for you both dig your pertatoes and weeds your garden. You both play the pianner of a Sunday, and you are both middle-aged.'

Of the social, political, industrial side of these transactions it scarcely behoves us to speak. An industrial irony of a semi-literary character may be mentioned. It is illegal for French women to do night work as compositors, but though they are chased from the composing room after dark there is nothing to prevent them from spending seven hours of the night in folding the journal they may not set up.

Among the methods for securing an alleviation of industrial evils may be mentioned the Consumers' League of the United States, which puts buyers in the possession of such facts as enable them to confine their patronage to firms which study the sanitary interests of their employees. Lord Rowton's model lodging-houses pay 5 per cent., it appears; but the scarcity of house-room is still one of the disgraces of civilisation. In the "Report of Council Transactions" is printed an ingenious scheme, drawn up by Mr. Gilbert Parker, for affording comfortable accommodation and board for women clerks earning 25s. a week. It may be added that several men were represented at the Congress, among them Dr. Cecil Reddie and Mr. J. H. Badley, whose schools have pointed the way to a revolution in educational methods.

Lady Aberdeen and her coadjutors may, on the whole, be congratulated on the manner of their performance. It was apparently, and perhaps justly, thought inexpedient to remodel the uncouth locutions of several writers; but their assistance might perhaps have been sought for the disentangling of a few really unintelligible sentences. There are some misprints: "A death-rate increased by 104 per cent." (p. 160, "Women in Social Life"), and another "beauté de la statistique," on p. 44 of "Women in Industrial Life," are beyond our comprehension. Cencin is evidently a misprint for Tencin on p. 127, Vol. I. of "Women in Professions." But the work involved in selecting and condensing was enormous, and there is plenty of evidence of conscientious attention to the discharge of it. The indexes add greatly to the utility of the volumes for reference.

In conclusion, what will come of all this talk? Three things, in one inevitable order—light, conviction, reform. It is woman, whom even man delineated, from of old, as Truth leaping from a well, as Aphrodite rising from the chaos of waves, who will set this old world right.

Mr. Lang's "Scotland."

A History of Scotland from the Roman Occupation. By Andrew Lang. Vol. I. (Blackwood. 15s. net.)

ERE now, alike in fiction and in sober narrative, Mr. Lang has touched upon more than one incident of Scottish history. It was to be expected that, sooner or later, he would busy himself with the whole stirring theme. He does not attempt the scale of Hill Burton or of Tytler, but proposes a "general history" in two volumes, which shall sum up the results of much recent research, and shall, at the same time, "introduce as much as possible the element of personal character and adventure, when duly vouched for by contemporary chroniclers, or, what is better, by contemporary letters and documents." The work is very clearly the outcome of wide reading, moderate speculation, and a real judiciousness in using the material of imaginative chroniclers, without the pedantry either, on the one side, of undue credulity, or, on the other, of excessive scepticism.

The volume now published begins with the Roman occupation and ends, in the midst of the sixteenth century, with the "tragedy" of Cardinal Beaton. The reader who

is acquainted with the various contributions of Mr. Lang to the study of primitive civilisations will regret that he has not found it consistent with the scheme of his work to give a somewhat fuller discussion of the *origines* and the early beliefs of the Scottish folk. He considers, indeed, the divergent theories of Prof. Rhys and Mr. Skene as to the Celtic or pre-Aryan character of the Picts and their relation to the certainly Celtic Scots. But he approaches the question purely from the side of philology, and refuses to deal with its more strictly anthropological aspects. "To discuss," he says, "the race and language of the tribes who incised on the rocks the universal hieroglyphs of early man, who used the polished neolithic weapons, to found theories on the shapes of skulls unearthed from burrows, is the province of another science, not of history." We rather demur to this. There is but one science of men, which is bound to draw its data from all sources indifferently, and certainly is not justified in consulting philology and neglecting craniology; and, sooner or later, historians will have to make up their minds to deal with the question how far a common language implies a common blood, on either or both of these a common religious and social organisation. Mr. Lang's treatment of the Celtic religion, again, is a little disappointing, consisting, indeed, mainly of a few pretty remarks about the *Sidhe*. Comparative folk-lore, however, affords material for a much fuller account, at least of the cult, if not the mythology, of the Scottish Celts; while even this latter can probably be to some extent reconstructed on the basis of popular legends and the fragments of the Ossianic cycle. On the other hand, Mr. Lang's summary of the nature and results, or want of results, of the brief Roman occupation of southern Scotland is excellent, and, better still the chapter called "Early Culture in Scotland," in which he deals with the obscure problems of crannoges, brochs, and earth houses, of the ogamic inscriptions, of the relation of Celt and Teuton, of tribal organisation, and of land tenure. Later on, a chapter on "Feudal Scotland" gives a similar survey of a further stage in the history of Scottish civilisation, and of the special forms taken by the universal West European institutions of feudalism in their application to the northern realm. All these synoptic chapters are very well done, and show real ability in the difficult task of extracting the essential from volumes of learned and often conjectural discussion. They are interspersed among other chapters of more direct narrative. Naturally, in handling the whole of the mediæval period of Scottish history, Mr. Lang is bound to keep before him the central theme of the relations between the Scottish and the English crowns. He traces, so far as the chroniclers permit, these relations during the dynasties of Kenneth McAlpine and Malcolm Canmore; and thus leads on to their dramatic outcome in the heroic struggles of the Wallace and the Bruce. Finally, he enters upon the chronicle of the mournful and fated house of Stuart. The reign of James the First, for all the failings of that high-handed monarch, is a pleasant oasis in the somewhat gloomy mediæval story. The forces of disorder were too much, in the long run, for James's gallant attempt to "make the key keep the castle, and the bracken bush keep the cow through all Scotland"; but, at least, he "would be a king," and legend gathered round his name. It need hardly be said that Mr. Lang dismisses with a sarcastic comment the somewhat flimsy theory which would deny to King James the authorship of "The King's Quair." With regard to "Kate Barlass," however, he is less conservative: "The legend of Catherine Douglas, who barred the boltless door with her arm, is, unfortunately, late and, perhaps, apocryphal." From James the First to James the Sixth the history of England is tragic, a "circle of calamity." The permanent element in the shifting phantasmagoria of royal minorities, intrigues, treacheries, and vendettas is "the essential and national

idea of resistance to England"; and it was previously in the closest union with England that history had national salvation in store for the country. The accuracy of Mr. Lang's estimate, both of episodes and of the general trend of things, must be left to the specialist to judge. Likely, Mr. Lang will have enough of criticism, for Scots are not slow to controversy in a good, or other, cause. As to the literary qualities of the book, we may say a word. They seem to us of a very high order. Mr. Lang has the lightest of touches in the presentment of material, which he has put together with the most conscientious pains. We had not thought that a difficult and broken chronicle, filled with crabbed names, could be made so interesting in the reading. He has a keen scent for the picturesque in phrase and detail, for the colour of a scene, for the quaint homespun of a contemporary writer. A brief specimen of his easy and effective narrative will not be out of place:

Of Scotland under James I. we have a curious and well-known sketch from the pen of Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini. Sent by the Council of Basel, a very young man at the time, the future Pius II. came into the frozen north like a shivering Italian greyhound on a curling-rink. There was only a space of little more than three hours of sunlight in winter, a circumstance since altered in the progress of civilisation. He calls the king a square-built man and too fat. He was anxious to see the tree which breeds Solan geese, but it was too far north. The half-naked poor, begging at church doors [a queer thing for an Italian to complain of], received not bread but a stove, which is greasy and burns. There is no wood in this naked region. Not till he reached Newcastle on his way south did Æneas find himself in a decently habitable region. Frightened by a storm at sea, he had made a vow of a barefoot pilgrimage to White Kirk. The weather was frosty, and the pilgrim suffered grievous things. Scotland was a country of unwallied cities: the houses, as a rule, were built without mortar, the horses were small, and curry-combs were unknown. Conversation was chiefly abuse of the English. When Regnault Girard came to bring the Daughter of Scotland to France, for her hapless marriage with the future Louis XI., he presented the queen with chestnuts, pears, and apples, and she was much pleased, for there is little fruit in Scotland. A mule was also a rare novelty, and much admired. Regnault speaks touchingly of the tears shed by James when he parted from his child.

Mr. Lang "was ever a fighter," and in these pages he more than once trails his coat. Mr. Henley brought a hornets' nest about his ears by praising Burns from a new and unconventional point of view. Mr. Lang is hardly less audacious in suggesting some qualifications of Knoxolatry. But his attitude towards Knox is as nothing when compared with his attitude towards the Douglasses.

Few things in Scottish history have been more disguised in popular books than the conduct of the house of Douglas. The comradeship of Bruce and the Good Lord James has thrown a glamour over the later Douglasses—men princely in rank, daring in the field, but often bitterly anti-national. The partiality of Hume of Godscroft, their *sennachie* or legendary historian, the romances of Pitscottie, the ignorance or prejudice of Protestant writers like Knox and Buchanan, the poetry of Scott, and the Platonic Protestantism of Mr. Froude, have concealed the selfish treachery of the house of Angus!

This is Mr. Lang's deliberate judgment; nor can he, when he meets a Douglas in the highways or the by-ways of his book, restrain a passing sneer. The Douglasses doubtless have their hereditary *sennachie* still, and we take it that anent this book there will ere long be wigs upon the green. As for us, we are indifferent to the reputations of clans or of church reformers, but we cannot away with Mr. Lang's practice of grouping his references and minor notes at the end of each chapter. It does not really add to the comeliness of the printed page, for the reference numbers remain hung up there. And as a matter of convenience, it is detestable.

Compress! Compress!

First and Last Poems. By Arabella Shore. (Grant Richards. 5s. net.)

LENITY to poets is not a charge of which we should feel greatly ashamed, nor is it the most heinous in the catalogue of possible sins. But criticism has its duties, and Miss Shore's volume enforces their exercise. The tyro, it is true, has his privileges; but the fact that these poems are avowedly the work of a lifetime forbids her the privileges of a beginner, though the book itself might well seem to claim them. What is it that we are apt to find in female writers with no shadowy touch of the poet's impulse, no outflow of heart and fancy which makes for verse, causing us reluctantly to deny them the attribute of classicality? Unclassicality, being a negative quality, may present itself in many ways. Most often it takes the form of diffuseness, diction inclining to conversational and journalistic conventions, disillusionisingly work-a-day speech in a tongue which has its separate and inexhaustibly opulent language sealed to poetic service, unsoiled by profane use. There is no virtue, indeed, *per se* in a pilfered richness of far-brought jargon; but at least it gives some merciful disguise to poverty of internal idea. Weak substance shows weakest associated with the loose-fitting customary phrase; good substance is enfeebled when it is sent abroad in such uncouthly habit. Such unclassicality is far from the educated simplicity of art or plenary inspiration—which is the finest art; far as chicken-broth from Liebig's Extract, far as distilled water from keen spring-water. It is poetry in ready-made clothing. And the separation from the significant fulness and inclusiveness of the great poets is enhanced by little femininities of expression which fatally suggest the feeble impulsiveness of the drawing-room; little dilutions of sentence-structure which recall the watered prattle of five o'clock tea. "Compress!" we sigh irritably; "in pity of poetry, good Madam, compress!" This unclassicality, in more or less degree, we impute to Miss Shore.

A cloud—that's Future Life—what lies before.

Why tell us that future life lies before?

How stronger far

The grasp of what *hath been* than what *shall be*.

The weak tautology and the weak italics are alike characteristic.

Has God willed to tell

By means of some strong instinct—hope and awe—
That when the last sigh's uttered a soul springs
Out in a moment on God-given wings
To scenes undreamt of, nor by poet's rhyme
Pictured, nor traveller to earth's farthest clime.

"Some strong instinct," "earth's farthest clime"—what could be more vague, customary, juiceless, and inadequate than these phrases, except the nerveless structure of the whole passage? A little further on Miss Shore apostrophises those who

Hold the human creature just

A solid nothing,

which is an absurdity that a little attention to meaning would have avoided. For, unfortunately, it is not only in form that she falls short. The saplessness which too often affects her language clings likewise to the substance. She is a meditative singer; but to be a meditative singer is not necessarily to be a thoughtful singer. Inexperience (specially female inexperience) loves vast, vague themes, which admit an interminable rambling looseness by their very absence of limit; so that no thought, however disjointed and inconsequential, comes irrelevant. Experience is well satisfied to make the most of a prudently contracted theme. Miss Shore is not a novice, but she shares this trait with the novice ambitious of profundity. One would spell "tyro" in such a title as *Death and Immortality*; or, *Life and Death*. A whole treatise of philosophy or theo-

logy might be written under the title. But the reader who adventures on Miss Shore's poem will not find himself carried out of his depth; though (if he be a logician) he may be out of his patience. In the less ambitious meditative poems a copious fluency of obvious reflections mingles with a regrettable lack of thought in the expression.

You lead us to the mountain-top
Where the great God who formed our kind
Sees, nor condemns, the tears that drop
From spirits bounded and half-blind.

Must one ascend a mountain-top for the Almighty to discern one's tears? And if not, what does the stanza mean? She wishes to Tennyson:

The God that did such sadness send
Send thee all comfort with it too;

and then rejoices to learn that He has "brought my mystic wishes true." What is there "mystic" in so commonplace a wish? And when she concludes by bidding the late Laureate

Twine all lost desires
About this central shaft of hope,

how can you twine a lost object about anything? These are trifles, but they are the trifles which make the difference between poetry and not-poetry. Nor can we say that the narrative poems, though better, reach any high standard. She concludes one poem on Woman with the words,

She asks no royal grant,
For she is free-born too;

Give her her human rights, and see what she can do!

Well, for one thing, she can write very much better poetry than Miss Shore has succeeded in writing. Better Miss Shore might write if she had a mind. "It is the mind," as Lamb said, "that is wanting." Heart and sensibilities she has in plenty; but for poetry a little more is needed, which Miss Shore has not yet attained.

Our Confounded Superiority.

Three Men on the Bummel. By Jerome K. Jerome.
(Arrowsmith. 3s. 6d.)

SUCH books as this are the despair of the reviewer. They do not, in fact, call for reviewing at all. They are written, they are published, the first edition consists of twenty thousand copies—and that is all that need be said. Their sole object being to make you laugh, if they succeed their existence is justified, and if they fail they are naught. To be quite frank, this particular book has not made us laugh at all, and therefore, as we have said, for ourselves it is naught. But as against this inability on our own part must be placed the testimony of a family of our acquaintance—collectively and individually quite as capable as we are—who have been reading Mr. Jerome's work in its serial form, and have laughed themselves weary over it, the test of our own laughter falls to the ground.

It might, however, answer the purpose of a review to inquire a little into the reasons why we ourselves have been unable to laugh. The chief and embracing reason is, of course, that we did not find it funny; but the case may be explored rather more fully than that. What, as a rule, does make us laugh? Well, we like a comic writer to have a gift of surprise. Mr. Jerome advertises the end of his joke from the very start. We like a comic writer to leave something to ourselves. Mr. Jerome leaves nothing. This is perhaps a sufficient explanation. But to go on, we like, in a narrative of the adventures of fellow-creatures on a holiday, to be a little bit interested in the minds of those fellow-creatures. Mr. Jerome has invented three of the least interesting figures that we can remember. And,

finally, we like humour to be fresh. Mr. Jerome's mechanism is the mechanism of Mark Twain (which has been stale these twenty years), and he lacks any of that great humorist's inspiration.

Now, all this looks like a large indictment of Mr. Jerome; but we want it to be clearly understood that we consider it really an indictment of ourselves. Through an unfortunate familiarity with the books of a different class of writers, and a regrettable prejudice in favour of half tones, we have spoiled our mind for Mr. Jerome's peculiar qualities. It does not give us the least pleasure to realise this; on the contrary, when we remember the exultant faces of two boys who related to us—breathlessly, one helping the other—the substance of the previous instalment of *Three Men on the Bummel* in the paper in which it appeared, we are filled with sorrow, almost with shame, because our effort to pump up a little enthusiasm over the jest (it related to the discomfort of patent bicycle saddles), and to simulate something that should pass for laughter, was so ghastly a failure that all the happy spirits died out of the expression of those appreciative readers, and we saw, and saw it with the utmost concern—for they consider us somewhat in the light of a dictator on books—an air of misgiving take its place, as though the doubt as to whether this sort of thing really was so funny as they had thought were creeping into their minds. Mr. Jerome may rest assured that we said nothing to spoil his welcome in that house. And it is because we do not want to do so in any other house that we have endeavoured to explain the situation so minutely.

A Cape Politician.

The Life and Times of Sir John Charles Molteno, K.C.M.G., First Premier of Cape Colony. By P. A. Molteno.
2 vols. (Smith, Elder & Co. 28s.)

AT first sight it would seem strange that the life of a Colonial politician, even one who possessed a claim to remembrance in that he was the first Prime Minister of Cape Colony, could not be told in less space than two stout volumes which, between them, contain little short of a thousand pages. To tell the truth, we live so fast nowadays that Sir J. C. Molteno and all that he did, or might have done, are already in a fair way to be forgotten; and, therefore, it is not surprising that Mr. P. A. Molteno should think it his duty to bring the fact of Sir J. C. Molteno's existence, personal and political, once more before the public. But the mystery vanishes with reading. The book is not so much a life of a former Premier of Cape Colony as a long and violent attack on two great men who have passed away—Lord Carnarvon and Sir Bartle Frere—who were before their time, and, consequently, were misunderstood and abused in their lifetime, and whose honoured graves are no protection from the spite of lesser men. What is valuable in this "life" could have been told in a quarter of the space, and this revival of forgotten controversies will have but little interest for the public. Mr. P. A. Molteno is not always accurate in his facts and in his suggestions of fact. Careful reading shows that he is aware that Sir Bartle Frere did not annex the Transvaal; but the impression left on the mind of one who came fresh to the subject would undoubtedly be that the Transvaal in 1877 was a flourishing and not a bankrupt State, and that Sir Bartle Frere was prompted by original sin to swallow it up. On p. 200 of Vol. II. Mr. Molteno says: "It has been contended that Sir Bartle Frere was not a consenting party to the annexation of the Transvaal." Mr. Molteno must, however, be aware, as he has presumably followed South African questions, that the present Sir Bartle Frere not long ago called attention in the public press to an article written by his father in a magazine nearly twenty

years ago, in which the ex-Governor of the Cape specifically declared that the annexation of the Transvaal was decided upon before he went out to South Africa, and that he was only connected with it after the event. A writer who takes upon himself to deal with the politics of that period should have known this fact even without Sir Bartle Frere's article, and certainly without the reminder by that statesman's son. If Mr. Molteno does know of it, he has been successful in concealing his knowledge.

But to turn to the nominal subject of the book. Sir J. C. Molteno was an Englishman of Italian descent, his father being in the Civil Service at Somerset House as Deputy Controller of Legacy Duty. The future Premier went out to the Cape in 1831 at the age of seventeen, and, after a few years' experience, started in business on his own account. Perhaps the most interesting part of the book is the short account of Mr. Molteno's life in the great Karroo, which was in those days much what the back country of Rhodesia is now. In 1843 he bought a farm at Nelspoort, at the foot of the Nieuwfeld Mountains, situated on the Salt River. The place is now on the railway, about halfway between Cape Town and De Aar Junction, of which so much has been heard of late. Not much over half a century ago,

this part of Africa harboured a greater variety and a greater number of the largest animals in the world than any other continent. The abundance of food thus available led to a corresponding variety of carnivorous animals and birds of prey, the former being led by the king of beasts—the lion himself, while next to him came the fierce leopard locally called a tiger, owing to its cunning, its vindictiveness and strength; below these came numerous leopards in a descending scale of size, with wild dogs, wild cats of every kind, wolves, hyenas, and jackals. The lion was just emigrating from this district when Mr. Molteno arrived. His shepherds appeared before him in a scared condition, and reported having seen one in the long reeds of the Salt River Vlei soon after he had settled in this part. It may be easily imagined what formidable difficulties the presence of these wild animals presented to the stock farmer. . . . The larger game began to move away before man, and the defenceless sheep took its place, and was called upon to supply food to the vast number of carnivora which were in occupation of the country. The lambs were carried off in numbers by the jackals, the wolves and hyenas made away with the grown sheep, the tiger would descend from his rocky fastness and in one night would indulge his love of slaughter and his thirst for blood by destroying twenty or thirty of your most valuable sheep, merely drinking their blood at the throat, and leaving them otherwise untraced. At another time, desiring a change of diet, your promising foal was carried off, and your calves were dealt with in a similar manner.

In 1854 Mr. J. C. Molteno represented Beaufort in the Cape Parliament, and formed his first Cabinet in 1872. He remained a principal figure in Cape politics until 1882, when he finally retired and was made a K.C.M.G. on the recommendation of Lord Kimberley, who was then Colonial Minister. Sir J. C. Molteno died on September 1, 1886, at the age of seventy-two.

He had lived long enough to be above the bitterness of party feeling. His death was the occasion of a unanimous and sincere expression of sorrow from the whole of the country, and from all political parties, who felt that they had lost a great and good man, indeed "the most representative man that the country had yet produced, whose name will ever be associated with the history of the Colony, and whose public career may always serve as a model for men, possibly possessed of more superficial brilliance, but who will never outshine him in the sterling qualities of political honesty, sound judgment, and common sense" (*Cape Argus*).

This certainly does not exceed the bounds of panegyric. Sir J. C. Molteno was an honest, cautious, and conscientious politician, without much foresight or imagination. The vast changes which have taken place of late in South Africa were beyond his prescience, and his mind seemed

unable to grasp more than the Cape Colony as it was when he knew it. His biographer has written his life from the same narrow point of view. As will be seen from the quotations, Mr. Molteno does not lay claim to any literary merit, or to any graces of style, and the book is emphatically not one to be taken up by the man wishing to learn the actual state of things in South Africa. It is an arsenal of controversial matter, intended first for the glorification of Sir J. C. Molteno, and secondly for the vilification of Lord Carnarvon and Sir Bartle Frere—if, indeed, the order should not be reversed. Still, it may be of some value to the future historian as giving the point of view of a certain set of politicians in South Africa, and for the sake of understanding that standpoint some will perhaps consent to wade through a mass of irrelevant matter. Had the book been the work of a judge and not of an advocate, the occasional passages in which Mr. Molteno hits the nail on the head would have had a greater chance of receiving attention.

Some Lessons for England.

Lessons of the War with Spain, and other Articles. By Alfred T. Mahan, D.C.L., LL.D., Captain United States Navy. (Sampson Low. 10s. 6d. net.)

CAPTAIN MAHAN'S aim in publishing these articles, collected from various American periodicals, is, as he says, to aid in the formation of an intelligent public opinion. And this not merely by pointing out the chief lessons which the American people ought to draw from their recent war with Spain. He thinks that the public should have a better acquaintance with the leading principles of warfare, which, as he says, are few and simple; and that the way to induce a better acquaintance in the public is to place before them narratives of warlike operations disencumbered of the detailed technicalities in which military and naval writers delight to array their works. The *Lessons of the War with Spain* is Captain Mahan's endeavour to supply such a narrative—what he calls a skeleton account of the operations leading up to the destruction of Cervera's fleet, with comments elucidating the principles, naval and military, on which they were based, or which they illustrate. It certainly fulfils his intention; its lucidity should make it understandable to any intelligent unprofessional reader, though perhaps an occasional danger of confusion might have been avoided by relegating to notes some of the incidental digressions in which the writer indulges, however timely and useful in themselves.

The book should be hardly less valuable to us than to Americans. If the excesses of the American "yellow" press (on which Captain Mahan is very severe) are avoided among us, it is none the less true that public opinion needs enlightening on many points. One lesson to which he calls attention has been driven home to ourselves recently. It is the ruinousness of preparing only or chiefly for defensive war. Sums of money are sunk on "home defence" which would better have been spent in preparing an expeditionary force, in strengthening our attack. For (apart from wars of the Boer type) the most effective, quickest, and least costly way of preventing invasion or attack by the enemy is to maim and occupy him by attack on his own resources. Mere defence, as the writer emphasises, leaves the enemy free to select his point of assault, while the passive side has to consider and guard every possible point of injury in a large extent of vulnerable spots; it leaves his sinews of war intact, even though his blows be baffled, and thereby lingers out the hostilities, which energetic attack might conclude at once—as happened with the American attack on Spain.

A cognate lesson is the neglect of coast defence, of fortifications. For lack of this, the American blockade of Cuba was never secure against attack, as it should have

been. Cienfuegos and Havana both required blockade; but only the blockade of Havana could be secured by an adequate squadron of battleships. That of Cienfuegos could at any time have been raised by the appearance of a Spanish warship. And why? Because Schley's Flying Squadron, which ought to have been before Cienfuegos, was locked up in Hampton Roads, to calm the fears of the undefended and panic-stricken coast-towns. Only when Cervera's whereabouts was known could the authorities bring the Flying Squadron into action. Captain Mahan thinks that England's dependence on other nations for food supply makes coast defence less important to her, and reduces her to depend chiefly on her fleet. But it may be questioned whether the possible panic of our great coast-towns might not produce a more or less paralysing effect on a portion of our fleet, obliging it to be kept in home waters when it was seriously needed elsewhere.

Another point is the value of battleships which can act together as a fleet, having, at any rate approximately, the same speed and the same offensive power. Not speed, but combined weight of guns and ability to steam and manœuvre together is the *desideratum*. Therefore, he advocates building a number of battleships of a certain medium type and practically equivalent speed, rather than sink the money on a few ships of large size. In connexion with this, and to be noted because there is a popular delusion to the contrary, is his emphatic declaration that battleships do not become useless because they are "obsolete"—that is, because ships of superior design are built subsequently. In the first place, such "obsolete" ships can be used, like irregular troops, for secondary purposes, setting free the newer ships for the more important duties proper to them—an invaluable function. Secondly, and more important yet, it is the view of naval authorities that the first line of battle, even though victorious, would be crippled and used up during the encounters and accidents of the opening war. Final victory would then rest with the nation which had the most "obsolete" ships to fall back upon; to fill the gaps in its first line, or, if necessary, to form a new fleet. Then the value to England of her numerous so-called "obsolete" battleships would become evident, and probably turn the scale decisively.

Of the many other lessons drawn by Captain Mahan from the war we do not speak, though most valuable for a right understanding of hostilities by the public. We have contented ourselves with a few which appeared most directly applicable to England, and for the rest we refer the reader to his exceedingly valuable and able book.

Other New Books.

CRICKET IN MANY CLIMES.

BY P. F. WARNER.

Mr. P. F. Warner (who is known to his friends and to ardent cricketers as "Plum") is the Middlesex amateur. After every English season, more or less, for some years he has added to the cricket of the summer—so insatiable are the sons of the game!—by joining an autumn or winter eleven for playing in other regions of the earth—the West Indies, America, Oporto, Canada, and South Africa—and it is the records of these tours which are given in his book. It was, perhaps, well to have them in this permanent form, for though many pages are necessarily rather small beer, and each bears a striking resemblance to the last, yet Lord Hawke, Mr. Warner's captain (to whom the book is dedicated) has done, by projecting these tours, so much for the cult of cricket in Greater Britain that a chronicle of the achievement is a valuable contribution to the history of the game. Mr. Warner's volume, however, has another value—it is vivacious and unaffectedly amusing. Many authors strive in vain all their

life for these two gifts—vivacity and amusiveness. Mr. Warner steps lightly in, and, holding the pen with not a tithe of the seriousness that belongs to his grasp of the bat, succeeds in capturing both. The book is the reflection of a happy, wholesome, public-school athletic temperament. (Heinemann.)

BRUGES: AN HISTORICAL SKETCH.

BY WILFRID C. ROBINSON.

If we cannot say that Mr. Robinson has produced that history of Bruges which has hitherto been sadly to seek, in English at all events, he has unquestionably given us an attractive and exceedingly well-written book. It is not to be expected that everybody who writes about Longfellow's "quaint old Flemish city" should catch its atmosphere and fix its aspects with the consummate art of the late M. George Rodenbach—we know, indeed, of no book which suggests the tender melancholy and paints the dreamy existence of the half-dead city like "Bruges la Morte." It is a wonderful story of commercial splendour, sturdy fighting, utter decay and abject misery, which Mr. Robinson has to tell and tells so well, and there are some novel points in his volume which deserve attention. He calls in question, for instance, the statements of the old writers as to the enormous population of Bruges relatively to its area, and, much as he loves it, he seems to suggest that it can never have been the premier city of Christendom. We should have been glad to see less actual history—which is already familiar enough—and more about the literary and artistic associations of the town. We read of it in Dante. Caxton abode there for at least three years; it is highly probable that Sir Thomas More wrote part of his *Utopia* there; so literary was it, indeed, early in the sixteenth century, that to Justus Lipsius it presented itself as the flower and Athens of the Low Countries. With its Memling and Pourbus in art, its Simon Stévin in mathematics, its Breidel and De Coninck as warriors and statesmen, Bruges possesses a roll of fame which even its neighbour, Ghent, with its Van Eyck, its Charles V., and its John of Gaunt can hardly beat. But to-day it is as the "Ville Musée," with its sweet savour of antiquity, its contemplative streets, and the placid tranquillity of its life, that we all know and delight in it. (Bruges: Louis de Plancke. 4s.)

GOVERNMENT OR HUMAN EVOLUTION.

BY E. KELLY.

During his connexion with the Good Government Clubs, which were organised in New York for the purpose of defeating Tammany Hall, the author of this book discovered that the world is out of joint, and he came to the laudable resolution to set it right. He found—what, indeed, he might have found at an earlier date—that very few people possess a working code of first principles, but simply vegetate in what has been aptly called "the furnished lodging of tradition." He accordingly worked out a systematic view of life so as to enable people to labour in unison toward a common ideal, and the result is the little volume before us.

The author covers a wide field, too wide, in fact, for the dimensions of his book. He travels, metaphorically speaking, from China to Peru, and has something to say about everything, but unfortunately he gives many openings for the guns of opponents. Thus he states, on the authority of John Fiske, that the infant brain is comparatively free from the convolutions which differentiate an educated brain from an uneducated one, and on the strength of this he argues that Nature brings a man into the world with a comparatively blank scroll upon which education can inscribe its law. But this is doing great injustice to that profound thinker, John Fiske, who contended that an infant's mind is not a blank sheet, but rather a sheet written over with invisible ink, and that the brain has definite tendencies

even at birth. Again, we are asked to believe that Mr. Herbert Spencer would have us contemplate with philosophic calm the miseries of the world, and quietly look on while struggling humanity fought it out according to the Queensberry rules. This is worse than sheer nonsense, and a very superficial acquaintance with Mr. Spencer's teaching would have prevented the author from giving expression to such a baseless calumny. (Longmans.)

Fiction.

Sophia. By Stanley Weyman.
(Longmans. 6s.)

MR. WEYMAN'S twelfth novel gives an elaborate and life-like picture of English manners in the year 1742, but it is somewhat slight as to theme, and the interest is scarcely well-sustained. The characters, moreover, are not presented in such a light as to excite either much admiration or much curiosity. Sophia is a young girl of breeding, with most of the faults of the eighteenth century Feminine. She is hoodwinked by a scoundrel, and when Sir Hervey Coke rescues her from a precarious situation she behaves with something of that shrewishness which her sister, Mrs. Northey, had exercised towards herself. Sophia is by no means a fascinating heroine, according to Mr. Weyman. Sir Hervey makes a real man, but his passion for the missish Sophia seems to rest on a frail foundation. Mrs. Northey is the most convincing person in the story. Her tongue wags with an excellent realism, and though she is a detestable creature, we like her for her flesh and blood. Sophia's brother, Sir Tom, is a young fool; Lady Betty is a ninny; Mr. Northey is a pompous ass; Hawkesworth, Oriana, and Oriana's father are adventurers all, of a peculiarly loathsome kind: so runs the list. The fact is that in *Sophia* the ingenuous reader pines for something to love; Sir Hervey is not enough. The other sort of reader, the sort that looks the horse in the mouth, will perceive that the intrigue of the tale is badly managed; since in the first half of the book is Sophia all but freed from her entanglements when mere chance steps in at the last instant and bids the game continue; this means clumsy craftsmanship. He will also perceive that not once does the emotional quality of the story rise to any notable height. In this respect the best chapter is that entitled "King Smallpox":

On the huge low wooden bed from which the coarse blue and white bedding protruded, two bodies lay sheeted. At their feet the candles burned dull before the window that should have been open, but was shut; as the thick noisome air of the room, that turned him sick and faint, told him. Near the bed, on the farther side, stood that he sought; Sophia, her eyes burning, her face like paper. His prey then was there, there, within his reach; but she had not spoken without reason. Death, death in its most loathsome aspect lay between them; and the man's heart was as water, his feet like lead.

"If you come near me," she whispered, "if you come a step nearer I will snatch this sheet from them, and I will wrap you in it! And you will die! In eight days you will be dead! Will you see them? Will you see what you will be?" And she lowered her hand to raise the sheet.

He stepped back a pace, livid and shaking. "You she-devil!" he muttered. "You witch!"

"Go!" she answered, in the same low tone. "Go! Or I will bring your death to you! And you will die! As you have lived, foul, noisome, corrupt, you will die! In eight days you will die—if you come one step nearer!"

She took a step forward herself. The man turned and fled.

Let us add that there is much quiet goodness in the book, and a continual striving towards naturalism and an avoidance of outworn conventions.

The Kings of the East. By Sydney C. Grier.
(Blackwood & Sons. 6s.)

IN this novel Miss Grier continues the adventures of the Mortimer family among European politics. "Count Cyril" now figures as the central impulse of a movement for the transformation of Palestine into a true Hebrew realm. "What a future would lie before the country which had the support of all the Jews in the world!" exclaims the Count, with his incurable grandioseness of idea. Lady Phil, his niece, is passionately wooed by a king, but ultimately, in a manner highly conventional, marries an excellent young Cambridge person of the name of Mansfield. The whole book, under an outward aspect of freshness and diversity, conceals a steadfast and immovable conventionality. Lord Caerleon's letter to his brother in Chap. II., for example, is a piece of pure convention—as conventional as a "stage-letter." And what shall be said of a passage like the following?

"I should like to say a word or two to that fellow," muttered Mansfield, indicating by a backward glance the oracle of fashion.

"I earnestly hope you won't. In the first place, he would not understand your German, and your righteous indignation would therefore be wasted. In the next, I would rather not kill him if I can help it."

"Kill him? How?"

"With a sword, my dear youth. Excuse me, but you are really so refreshingly young. Is it beyond your powers of imagination to conceive that if you insulted him he would forthwith challenge me?"

"I can look after my own quarrels, Count," very haughtily.

"In that case I should very soon have a funeral to look after in the British cemetery," was the calm reply.

The fact is, Miss Grier's recipe for the manufacture of cosmopolitan novels is growing effete with use. She is a clever craftsman—constructs well, writes well, and wears the cloak of omniscience with ease and grace. Her work is readable, and agreeable enough so long as you maintain towards it an attitude of polite interest. But if you demand from it more than you would demand from an acquaintance it will fail you, because it has nothing more than this to give.

Notes on Novels.

[These notes on the week's Fiction are not necessarily final.
Reviews of a selection will follow.]

HILDA WADE.

BY GRANT ALLEN.

This series of episodes was appearing in a magazine at the time of Mr. Grant Allen's death, and it is understood that he considered it his best work of fiction. It is a story of advanced medical science, in which Hilda Wade's womanly intuition in reading character, temperament, and physical signs, places her almost abreast of the great Prof. Sebastian. Hilda Wade and Sebastian are soon pitted against each other in a deep private concern affecting the memory of Hilda's father. Both characters are powerfully drawn. (Grant Richards. 6s.)

FROM DOOR TO DOOR.

BY BERNARD CAPES.

Mr. Capes has here printed stories contributed by him to a number of magazines, and six others which appear for the first time. The miscellaneous character of the collection is indicated in the sub-title: "A Book of Romances, Fantasies, Whimsies, and Levities." Mr. Capes's now familiar style is very apparent, dip where one will: "Now, as they stood a moment, watchful of each other, the apple in the peasant's throat flickered of a sudden; and immediately a rising moan, a very strange little ululation, began to make itself audible, and the man lifted his chin, as if to give some voice in him freer passage." (Blackwood. 6s.)

FROM SAND-HILL TO PINE.

BY BRET HARTE.

Seven short stories, all characteristic: "A Niece of 'Snapshot Harry's'" is the story of a coach accident in the Rockies; "A Jack and Jill of the Sierras" is a mining story, with a romance in it; and in "A Belle of Cañada City," "Mr. Bilson's Housekeeper," &c., we are in familiar Bret Harte environments. (Pearson Ltd. 6s.)

NELL GWYNN—COMEDIAN.

BY F. FRANKFORT MOORE.

With a very light hand Mr. Moore weaves some of the incidents of Nell Gwynn's life into a readable story. We meet Nell outside the King's Playhouse in Drury-lane, selling her oranges, and joking with the Duke of Buckingham and Sir Charles Sedley and finally with the King when he leaves the theatre. "Tis either a fortune or a huge misfortune," says her plebeian lover, Dick Harraden, when Nell is engaged by Mr. Killigrew to act in the King's company. The vein of comedy is kept throughout, and the story is illustrated by photographs. (Pearson Ltd. 6s.)

KIDDY.

BY TOM GALLON.

Mr. Gallon's gallery of Dickensian characters is distinctly enriched by "Kiddy" and the Deak family. The picture of Mr. Deak, the desk-bound, soul-crushed plutocrat who has never known the joy of life, and is aware of it, is capitally drawn. His niece, Kiddy Tremlett, is his ray of sunshine, and her love affairs supply Mr. Deak with emotions and incidents which amply compensate for the dullness of his earlier life. "The fierce joy or pain of living had passed him by . . . now, with the obstinacy of the inexperienced, he would have been glad to clutch—gingerly, perhaps—at Sorrow's robe, if in that way he might see life." (Hutchinson. 6s.)

THE SANCTUARY CLUB.

BY L. T. MEADE AND R. EUSTACE.

A medical-psychological series of episodes, with which the Sanctuary Club—an advanced sanatorium at Hampstead—has only a general connexion. The narrator acts as doctor and personal friend to many of the patients, and has "to face adventures the most thrilling and dangers of so hairbreadth a character that even now my pulse quickens when I think of them." (Ward, Lock. 5s.)

BY MRS. L. T. MEADE AND

WHERE THE SHOE PINCHES.

CLIFFORD HALIFAX.

Mrs. Meade's industry is uncanny. Here, in collaboration, she relates the experiences of a London doctor who sees "day by day human nature without any gloss upon it," and who undertakes to show "where the shoe pinches in many lives." Sixteen shoes are described, and their cruel points indicated. (Chambers. 3s. 6d.)

TO THE HEALING OF THE SEA.

BY FRANCIS H. HARDY.

A capital love story, starting with a Stock Exchange disaster in New York, whereby Carroll Livingstone is compelled to leave America to avert ruin. On the *St. Paul* he meets Clara Eastwin—"both new to the sea and its invitations; strangers to the forcing and fusing isolation of steamer life." The steamer life is made delightful to the reader, and the ultimate saving of Livingstone's reputation is an exciting financial episode. (Smith, Elder. 6s.)

A CYNIC'S CONSCIENCE.

BY G. T. PODMORE.

A clever story of duplicity in love. Stanley Wade is a weak and dreaming egotist, whose self-flatteries and shifts of conscience are laid open mercilessly. Winning a girl's love by crooked methods, he has the grace to save her from himself in the end. The story is not exactly easy reading, but is above the average in aim and ability. (Arnold. 6s.)

THE PURPLE ROBE.

BY JOSEPH HOCKING.

Lancashire Nonconformist life is drawn in Mr. Hocking's new story, and the incidents arise out of a debate between Duncan Rutland, the new minister of Tudor Chapel, and

Father Sheen, the Roman Catholic priest of the town. Duncan Rutland's controversial victory, the advent of a Jesuit father to repair the damage done to Catholicism, and Duncan's love for Alison Neville, a Roman Catholic young woman of high birth, are handled in Mr. Hocking's characteristic way; and the end is, of course, Alison's conversion to Protestantism, and great glory to Tudor Chapel. The story is well adapted to its predestined readers. (Ward, Lock. 3s. 6d.)

A PLAIN WOMAN'S PART.

BY NORLEY CHESTER.

A tranquil love-story, in which children play a great part. The background is rural, and the narrator is a "Good Fairy" to the heroine, Doris, whose first love affair turns on a bottle of acid drops. (Arnold. 6s.)

THE CROWNING OF GLORIA.

BY RICHARD REARDON.

We begin with a Sussex lane and a young temperance orator who is in danger of being badly beaten by his audience until the heroine arrives with a horse-whip, when love and village politics begin to divide the reader's attention. The heroine's name is Gloria, and the story is like that. (John Long. 6s.)

THE ATHERSTONE BEQUEST.

BY MRS. CHARLES E. TERROT.

A novel of the picnic and tea-tray order. There is much marrying and giving in marriage. Everybody and everything are accounted for, and the last chapters seem alive with babies and complacent mothers. (Burleigh. 6s.)

TONY LARKIN, ENGLISHMAN.

BY MRS. EDWARD KENNARD.

"The path of duty is the road to glory," and it is trodden by Tony, who begins as the typical stupid, but plucky, army candidate, and ends by taking the Victoria Cross and attending at Windsor. To his sweetheart he describes the Queen as "a regular brick." "She said I was to come again in a fortnight, and bring you with me, as she wishes to make your acquaintance and present you with a Cashmere shawl." (Hutchinson. 6s.)

A GIRL OF THE NORTH.

BY HELEN MILCOTE.

The "girl of the north" is Launa Archer, and her "north" is Canada. We find her motherless at fifteen, with English and French blood in her veins, and a suspicion of Indian blood. "Her voice had a low, soft richness in it that reminded Mr. Archer of a squaw." In London, whither she soon came, Launa was a success. "Being a Canadian, all things were expected of her; and being rich, all things were forgiven her." The story resolves itself into a biographical circle, Launa reverting after many days to her love of Canada and her Canadian lover. (Greening. 6s.)

DAVID POLMERE.

BY MRS. LODGE.

"To enumerate the throng of fashionable folk that congregated in St. George's Church, Hanover-square, to witness the ceremony would be to copy a few pages out of the Peerage. The bride looked lovely in Duchess satin. . . ." (Digby, Long & Co. 6s.)

BY LONE CRAIG-LINNIE BURN.

BY ARCHIBALD McILROY.

Village politics and homely ways and people in a remote Scottish village in the sixties. The advent of the railway is described, and the village doctor's heroism in a diphtheria case. (Unwin. 2s. 6d.)

AN IMPERIAL LIGHT HORSEMAN.

BY HAROLD BLORE.

A story of the war and Boer life generally, by a writer who was born in South Africa, and once talked with President Kruger. The battle of Elands Laagte, the siege of Ladysmith, and the life of prisoners in Pretoria are described. (Pearson Ltd. 6s.)

ORA PRO NOBIS.

BY JAMES BAGNALL STUBBS.

"A novel," says the title-page; but "a tract" would describe the book more accurately to the novel-seeking reader. (Skeffington.)

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The Author of "The Farringdons."

An Enquiry.

It is no fault of Miss Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler's that she has been recently classed with the great novelists of the nineteenth century; but the opprobrium of an indiscreet admirer's foolishness usually attaches also in some degree to the object of admiration, and so, in the minds of those who care for literature, there must, however illogically, be a certain faint resentment against Miss Fowler herself because of her success. In writing her three facile and vivacious novels she was probably innocent of any suspicion that, being taken seriously, they would reach an aggregate circulation of a hundred and twenty thousand copies, and so place her where she at present is, in the very pupil of the public's eye. No matter! One may trespass innocently, but the penalty remains. When she hears the cold and inimical question, "What are you doing up there, and how did you get there?" Miss Fowler will have either to answer it by her books, or, soon or late, obey the harsh behest: "Descend." And that last will be the sufficient penalty.

Without offering any prophecy whatever as to the future, it is safe to assert that Miss Fowler has not yet even begun to prove a title to the position into which she has been thrust. If the wonderful vogue of *Concerning Isabel Carnaby* was disconcerting, the still more wonderful vogue of *A Double Thread* was absolutely bewildering. As for *The Farringdons*, though it is the best of the three, it marks only an inconsiderable advance, and a brief examination of it should show clearly that it deserves no better adjective than "bright." The heroine of *The Farringdons* is Elizabeth Farringdon, a distant cousin of two South Staffordshire Methodist spinsters, Cousin Maria and Cousin Anne, who owned a vast ironworks and ruled a district. The proper heir to the ironworks had been "a handsome, weak boy," named George, who ran off to Australia, and rumour said that he had married and died out there, leaving a widow and a son. The hero of the novel is Christopher Thornley, nephew of the general manager of the ironworks. The birth of Christopher was not quite free from mystery, for his mother (like handsome, weak George) had run off and got married, and, a stricken widow dying in a London lodging-house, had confided Chris to his uncle's care. Elizabeth and Chris, companions from childhood, fall in love, but only Chris is aware of the fact. Elizabeth by turns caresses and flouts him, and the honest-hearted youth keeps well the secret of his devastating passion. In due course Elizabeth grows up, and a clever and plausible stranger comes to occupy a neighbouring chateau, "The Moat House." We need scarcely state this stranger's name: it is Tremaine. If it had not been Tremaine it would have been Darcy. Tremaine, scoffing at creeds, and professing the vague religion of humanity, "gradually unmoored Elizabeth from the old faiths in which she had been brought up." Everyone else detected the hollowness of him; the common people defeated him utterly in spiritual argument,

and Chris succinctly called him a conceited ass; but he imposed on Elizabeth. He might have married her, had he not unfortunately proposed to her immediately after a religious service at which she had "found the Christ." In that moment of ecstasy she was enabled to form a true estimate of his worth. Ultimately he married her school friend, Felicia, and had an unhealthy child, and was converted at its death-bed. Cousin Anne and Cousin Maria died, and Elizabeth became heiress to the Farringdon possessions, provided always that the true missing heir should not be discovered. Chris was the executor of this will, and he departed to Australia to search for the heir. Elizabeth burgeoned out into a great painter of moral ideas. She entered the art-world, shone at an Academy soirée, queened it in the highest circles, and nearly fell a victim to another deceiver, Cecil Farquhar. From Cecil she was saved by the pathetic appeal of a young woman whom the scoundrel had deserted in favour of Elizabeth's gold. Finally, she married Chris, who, it should be superfluous to explain, was himself the missing heir. Such is the plot. Outside the plot, and not connected with it, are a number of persons whose business it is to talk *apropos des bottes*. Chief among these are Mrs. Bateson and Mrs. Hankey, two Methodist housewives of the working class. The one is an optimist, pre-occupied with marriages; the other a pessimist, preoccupied with funerals. Their grotesque, farcical, and sometimes amusing chatter fills scores of pages. With one exception, not a single character in the book is at once realised and original. Save only Elizabeth, they are all either labelled and well-worn types, like Christopher and the spinster cousins, or mere names, like Felicia and Cecil Farquhar. Elizabeth has some existence and some originality. She is a very trying creature, often violently rude, and capable of atrocious vulgarity in the unwearied effort to be smart; but she is alive, and she possesses good impulses and a warm heart.

It is no doubt partly due to defects of plot and of character-drawing that the tale leaves no impression of reality, but another equal cause of its failure lies in the author's apparently complete ignorance of the craft of telling a story. Every chapter is a proof of this ignorance. Chapter IV., for example, entitled "Schooldays," and consisting of seventeen pages, is made up as follows:

Death of Cousin Anne and its effect on Elizabeth	2 pages.
Description of school and headmistress	3 "
A conversation on ideals concerning the future between Elizabeth and Felicia	3 "
A conversation about everything and nothing between Mrs. Bateson and Mrs. Hankey	7½ "
Miscellaneous matter	1½ "
Total	17 "

After this manner two years highly important in the moulding of Elizabeth's mind are expeditiously dealt with. The whole book is like Chapter IV., a shapeless medley of utterances which are chiefly beside the point. Miss Fowler is always forgetting her story and then returning to it with a sudden, alarmed start. It is the trifles, the surfaces of things, the unimportant side-issues, that engage her inconstant mind. Like her volatile heroine, she must be continually talking—stating, contrasting, sermonising, and composing essays instead of attending to business. Miss Fowler has accomplished the *reductio ad absurdum* of the amorphous English novel. She never grapples with a situation or an epoch of development; she never has time to do so. She makes Elizabeth pass from an amateur to a recognised artist in four lines. She is for ever telling you about her characters and never presenting them. The intimacy between Elizabeth and Tremaine gets as far as a daily interview before the latter has opened his mouth to the reader. Miss Fowler is so busy with ideas—very superficial ideas—that mere men and women are forced

into a secondary position. That the characters of the tale are not firmly established in her mind as living entities, that they are not authentically imagined, is shown by the fact that often, from sheer thoughtlessness, she allows them to behave in a manner utterly impossible. The notion of Elizabeth driving round the country alone with Tremaine in Tremaine's mail phaeton would have staggered Cousin Maria, but Miss Fowler seems to regard it as a most ordinary procedure for a young girl reared behind the high spiked walls of strict convention. This is a mild instance. A much more serious one is Farquhar's letter to the sweetheart whom he jilted—a piece of caddishness and fatuity of which it is inconceivable that even Farquhar could have been guilty.

The prevailing quality of the book, colouring it everywhere, is its crudeness—of style, thought, feeling, and wit—the immature crudeness of a clever girl who, while already proficient in the jugglery of phrases, has yet everything to learn about life and about literature. Miss Fowler has no literary charm, no sense of style, no reverence for her art. She quotes two lines from one of the loveliest passages in all Shakespeare (Constance's outburst, *King John*, Act III., Scene 1) and perpetrates a misquotation in each line. Here is a specimen of her metrical chapter-headings:

Shall I e'er love thee less fondly than now, dear?
Tell me if e'er my devotion can die.
Never until thou shalt cease to be thou, dear;
Never until I no longer am I.

A merely literary crudity will affect the large public neither one way nor the other, since the large public is entirely uninterested in questions of style; but all other crudities appeal strongly to that public; and herein lies the main secret of Miss Fowler's popularity. On p. 185 occurs the following sentence: "She had run downstairs at full speed in order to enter the dining-room before the dishes, completing her toilette as she fled; and she had only beaten the bacon by a neck." After reading *The Farringdons* from end to end, that phrase persistently haunts us, the supreme example of Miss Fowler at her most characteristic—*beaten the bacon by a neck*. It is precisely by such phrases that the large public is diverted. One of them would secure the success of a page, and Miss Fowler will put twenty on a page. She can produce titillating phrases as easily as a conjurer showers rosettes and guinea-pigs from an empty hat; and it is the endless titillation of them which constitutes her readableness. Wit, fancy and philosophy—Miss Fowler pours out her treasures with marvellous fecundity and untiring glibness. There are no intervals, no dull moments. You might say of this book, as of a well-known public resort—"fourteen hours' continuous amusement." Not the most casual bit of description but is fully adorned. Listen:

Sedgehill High-street is nothing but a part of the great high road which leads from Silverhampton to Studley and Slipton, and the other towns of the Black Country; but it calls itself Sedgehill High-street as it passes through the place, and so identifies itself with its environment, after the manner of caterpillars and polar bears, and other similarly wise and adaptable beings. At the point where this road adopts the pseudonym of the High-street, close by Sedgehill Church, a lane branches off from it at right angles, and runs down a steep slope until it comes to a place where it evidently experiences a difference of opinion as to which is the better course to pursue—an experience not confined to lanes. But in this respect lanes are happier than men and women, in that they are able to pursue both courses, and so learn for themselves which is the wiser one, as is the case with this particular lane.

The fact is, that the uncultivated reader is content to live wholly in and for the moment, sentence by sentence. Keep him amused and he will ask no more. You may delude him, you may withhold from him every single thing to which he is rightfully entitled, but he will not care. The more crude you are, the better will he be pleased.

It is a magic gift, this power to titillate—an absolution for every sin of omission and commission, a blind for all defects. It will excuse the inexcusable. It caused thousands of people to condone the amazing plot of *A Double Thread*, and it will cause the same thousands to ignore the multifarious delinquencies of Miss Fowler's latest work.

There are, of course, subsidiary elements of popular success in *The Farringdons*—the trite old-fashion of the plot, the sugared sentimentality, the smoothing-down of event and of character so as to avoid that disturbance of fixed and roseate ideas which the general reader seldom pardons in any novel. And there is the moral tone. "The tone of these books is so excellent," said a minister of the Established High Church to his bookseller. "I can put them into the hands of any of my young people." "Don't you think they are rather flippant?" the bookseller suggested. "Oh, no!" answered the parson, "*It's all done in the right spirit*." And it is. One may applaud Miss Fowler's spiritual intentions almost without reservation. She is cocksure, pert, superficial, slangy, unseemly (in a literary sense), and her hard, patronising attitude towards the universe is notably annoying; but at the root of her is something which makes for tolerance and moral, if not artistic, righteousness.

Things Seen.

The Mongrel.

I SAT by a roadside and two boys passed that way. The one was strong and sturdy: he was tanned with wind and weather, he clumped along in hob-nailed boots, and from his jacket pocket dangled the end of a rope.

The other was frail, stunted, and lame. He hung behind, partly because of his lameness, partly because he was carrying something, and that something was a dog—only a little one-eyed mongrel, with a shaggy, ill-kept coat and a limp, bandaged paw.

"Step out, can't ye?" bawled the boy in front: "let the bloomin' dawg do 'is own walking; 'e won't git no more chance!" and he laughed.

But the lame boy said nothing, only held his burden closer; while his features twitched, and the dog put up its head and licked the thin, sallow face.

They passed by, and I followed them with my eyes. It was springtime. About me throbbed a world of quickening life. There was the chirping of birds, the buzzing of bees, the bursting into bud of countless green things; there was the sweet earthy smell of the fresh brown mould, the warm touch of the sun's first kiss.

The first boy stooped and sought about, and when he rose I saw a big stone in his hand; then he drew the rope from his pocket and fastened the stone to one end; and I thought of the pond, lying deep and silent below the dip of the hill, where the mill-wheels sing their ceaseless song all through the summer-time.

Then the boys disappeared from sight, and I sat thinking.

After a time I heard a cheery sound—it was the first boy whistling, for he felt the joy of life, and behind him lagged the lame boy; his arms were empty, and now and then he drew the back of his hand across his eyes, for he felt the pain of death, the void and the loneliness.

Solomon's Seal.

THE rehearsal was over. From the stage door of the Theatre of Varieties emerged a troupe of about a dozen men. They shivered in their fancy Oriental costumes as their dark skins came in contact with the cold air. On the bills they figured as "Arabs," albeit their native country was Morocco. They were at once surrounded by

the small boys of the street. Through these they patiently filed, until they reached a small tobacconist's. They all crowded in, and their leader, the only one who knew any European tongue, began to bargain for cigarettes in a mixture of broken English and German, the latter because he and his gang had just come from fulfilling an engagement on the Continent. The shopkeeper studied them with a languid interest, and when, after considerable wrangling and fumbling, they finally collected among themselves enough to pay him, he suddenly opened his till, and, taking a coin from an inner compartment, thrust it into the hands of the spokesman. "I reckon that piece of money came from your country," he remarked. He was right. It was a "floos," the smallest of Moroccan small change, a rude farthing of copper, with a double triangle, the so-called "Solomon's Seal" standing out in high relief. The effect of this talisman upon the acrobats was instant and amazing. Trash as it was, it recalled to each of them a long-lost home. In one dazzling flash each saw what he had left. One saw himself in the desert, free, with horse and gun, *free*; another felt the intoxication of hashish, and remembered a familiar divan, and familiar ecstasies. To one, the magical hexagon spoke of a dead woman; to another it was the living, a pair of black eyes behind a lattice, eyes that he knew had long been consoled. Each dreamed his dream. The interpreter solemnly kissed the token; "Maraksh!" he whispered, and passed it to the next man, who also raised it to his lips. Each in turn pressed upon it that sacramental kiss; then, taking up their purchase, they quietly shuffled out into the night.

Paris Letter.

(From our French Correspondent.)

A French Apostle of National Energy.

IN travelling about this small globe, nothing has so much struck me as the complacent ignorance each race lives in of every other race. A Spanish general once doggedly maintained before me that while in England the young girl is outrageously emancipated, the British matron lives in such a condition of unexampled servitude as not to be free to speak in the presence of her husband and son. In the Philippine Islands he had met some cowed lady of England who, when he addressed his speech to her, turned her eyes imploringly upon her mate, mutely soliciting permission to reply to the don. The husband answered for her, and the lady sighed and looked away. He based his observations of the customs of Great Britain upon this single fact. Once more was I startled in a like fashion. An Austrian and a French lady discussed in my presence the unhappy position of Englishwomen, and stoutly affirmed that these martyrs of harsh domestic law have not the right to eat at their husband's table. "The husbands and sons eat together in the dining-room, and the poor women eat with their children upstairs in the nursery," they explained. Though the Spaniards are enormous eaters, it is a fixed idea in other countries that they live upon bread and olives, that the table of the nobles is of a classic frugality, and I have even heard a Frenchman insist that there is no such thing in Spain as a genuine nobleman, that the aristocracy is composed of shoddy *rustaques* and masquerading beggars. These are people you must not hope to teach. Neither travel, nor books, nor the commerce of men will assist them to knowledge that would shatter their temple of prejudices. And the more fixed and impenetrable by light are these prejudices, the more astounding their ignorance of races as good as their own, the more passionate their hatred and contempt of every land and people existing by the idle grace of an injudicious Deity, be sure the greater is their claim to the virtue of patriotism.

In France, to be a patriot implies also declared war within those frontiers with all who bear a name with any taint of cosmopolitanism about it, a name that does not savour of old France; with, as well, those of the purest-sounding of French names should their owners happen to be Protestants, Freethinkers, Freemasons, or members of an anti-Nationalist government. Anti-Semitic ladies teach their dogs to bark when the word Jew is pronounced in their presence, and mothers are not ashamed to teach baby lips to lisp in public at the sight of a chosen nose: "Sale Juif."

This would be ridiculous enough if it were not so inexpressibly sad. For it is ever a sad spectacle to see the immense majority of a nation at war with the best part of that nation—its thinking, disinterested, and liberal minority. And when a country whose idol is a General Mercier offers as a bribe all chances of success and social prestige we may not wonder that the circle of honest souls should be as narrow as the little band of early Christians gathered of old in the Catacombs. Pending the hour when Mercier's honoured ashes will be carried in triumph to the hall of heroes—the Pantheon—his admirers are busy compiling a Nationalist literature. Its lights are many, but none of such an opaque luminosity, such an aggressive dullness, such repellent modernity as M. Maurice Barrès, whose *Appel au Soldat* has just appeared. It is the second interminable volume of a trilogy in honour of national energy. The first was the unreadable and extraordinary *Déracinés*. Has an author the right to give such a misleading title as "novel" to books like *Déracinés* and *Appel au Soldat*?

Déracinés was a pretentious and uninteresting history of the development of seven Lorraine youths of different rank, who are in a kind of Dumasque conspiracy (without any of Dumas' wit and high-spirited charm) to conquer Paris. The writer's object is to expose to us the evils of uprooting from the soil of provincial souls. I cannot say what Lorraine would have made of these mediocre sons adrift from her bosom. Paris, of course, made nothing of them. There is not a generous, a noble, a disinterested trait among the seven; and, considering their youth and the purpose which brings them to Paris, we cannot accept, as Mr. Barrès does, that mere contact with the capital has so speedily vulgarised and degraded them. Noble and studious and disinterested provincials live all their lives in Paris around us, and die undegraded and undiminished by years spent upon the banks of the lovely Seine. But vulgar-minded, voracious young wolves who come to devour or be devoured will naturally follow the path of M. Barrès' seven Lorraine youths.

The *Appel au Soldat* carries us into the famous and trivial Boulanger conspiracy. M. Barrès is a passionate Boulangerist, ever waiting and watching for a second Boulanger. It is an open secret that he is his hero of predilection, François Sturel, the ardent follower of Boulanger. The difference between the *Appel au Soldat* and the ordinary *roman à clef* is that no key here is needed. M. Barrès gives the names in full. Cornelius Herz, Baron Reinach, the unhappy Joseph Reinach, Paul Déroulède, Dillon, Boulanger, Mme. de Bonnemains, all political and journalistic Paris, is here named in full. We see the fantastic Déroulède in his different ineffectual and rather silly dramatic scenes with that ineffable humbug, the hero of *café chantants*, General Boulanger. We are spared no cough of the unfortunate Marguerite. Boulanger, as painted by his fervent follower, is an appalling specimen of a political mountebank. One never realised more terribly than in these deadly dull pages the truth of General de Gallifet's words in the Chamber the other day—the fool had not even the makings of a criminal in him. The charlatan who knows himself for a charlatan is usually a very clever man, but the charlatan who takes in himself as Boulanger did is predestined for inglorious failure. In the hands of a writer of some dramatic instinct, with

only a modish share of the novelist's art, with a large and luminous style, and a creative as well as an analytic gift, the amazing story of Boulanger's rise and fall, his inexplicable popularity—based on good looks of a very common kind, and a black charger—his instant desertion and melodramatic end, might have made an excellent subject of a novel. But M. Barrès writes a deplorable and exasperating French, and his novels resemble the lives of his seven Lorraine youths. They are not illuminated by a single ray of sunshine, by a smile, by a witty or humorous phrase, by a vivid description, by a pleasing sentence. Style so dense, figures so inanimate, speech so dull and vulgar, scenes so purposeless, so unrevealing, so lacking in all the attributes of dramatic art, it would be impossible to match elsewhere. If you were to patch together a series of newspaper articles upon persons and public events during a certain set of years, the result would be a book much resembling *Appel au Soldat*. Only the chances are, it would be a great deal more readable, for few newspaper editors would tolerate a style so inarticulate, so stupidly impenetrable, meaning so little in an idle pretentiousness of envelope as that of M. Maurice Barrès. And certainly no editor out of Bedlam would print the terrible chapter "La Vallée de la Moselle," recording the wanderings of two of our Lorraines in search of their national roots in about 150 pages. The Prussians in this period of the awakening of national energy are handled as in the subsequent period the Anglo-Saxons may expect to be handled. In the valley of the Moselle we are told that "these excellent folk have all the distinction of old towns, apply themselves all the more to the practice of courtesy and urbanity in reprobation of that Teutonic heaviness which will always seem blackguardism to French sensibilities." It would be curious to learn what aspect "French sensibilities" have for the German mind. As revealed by the eminent Maurice Barrès, the word *goujaterie* would not be altogether inappropriate. The author, under the thin disguise of François Sturel, comports himself with complacent grossness and ineptitude. His venomous hatred of his old master Bouteiller is scarcely more unintelligent than his deification of a cheap idol like Boulanger. And his relations with Mme. de Nelles, his accomplice in the inevitable tale of adultery, are displayed with a hideous cynicism, an absence of heart, or even passion, which leave us abashed by the thought that there are men and women who can find their pleasure in sinking for so little. As the heroine is merely a name for us, without character or features or any physical, moral or mental trait to enable us to take the faintest interest in her fortunes, it does not excite our indignation to find her falling into the arms of a lover without even the saving excuse of persecution and overmastering temptation. Her fall, like her personality, is described by words that have no actual significance for us. It is as if a stranger in a train were to say to you: "In such a year I had a mistress whose favourite colour was red and who was fond of music." You would learn of the insignificant fact, and an hour afterwards remember nothing of the lover or his mistress. And just so indifferent are we to Mme. de Nelles, so unmoved are we by her love, which is silly and unclean, and by her suffering in neglect, which is shallow and vain. As for her lover, we are stupefied by his fatuity and vulgarity. An animal could not possibly put less heart and brains into its loves than this mediocre partisan, who, not at all offered us as a type of political adventurer, exclaims brutally on learning of his chief's defeat: "Boulanger is but an accident. We'll find other Boulangisms." This, we know, is the gallant Paul Déroulède's theory, who stoutly professes himself to be a Boulangist waiting for a second, a third, a fourth Boulanger.

There is one little sentence in these dull 550 pages that has a touch of humanity, of feeling, a faint whiff of delicate sentiment. Writing of Boulanger's desperate

solitude after the death of Mme. de Bonnemains, he says: "In these funereal soliloquies his whole being, once a little vulgar, optimist and sociable, was transformed under the beneficent influence of sorrow." The last line is "death to traitors and robbers." Here is prophecy of a future war-cry.
H. L.

Correspondence.

Shakespeare in Fiction.

SIR,—In to-day's ACADEMY "The Bookworm" asks if the late William Black introduced Shakespeare in person into his story called *Judith Shakespeare*. He did. The Bard appears at New Place, and is then writing "The Tempest" and "The Winter's Tale." Though the book can hardly be called a success on the whole, parts of it are very charming.

Other novels in which Shakespeare is introduced are *The Jolly Roger*, by Hume Nisbet; *Master Skylark*, by J. Bennett; and *Shakespeare and his Friends*, published anonymously in Paris in 1833, not to mention Mr. Lang's unpublished Elizabethan romance, in which, he tells us, Shakespeare speaks in blank verse! No doubt there are very many others in which Shakespeare appears, a list of which would be interesting.—I am, &c.,

CHARLES R. DAWES.

Birmingham: May 5, 1900.

The Name of the Novelist.

SIR,—While reading the first page of the ACADEMY for May 5 this evening, I came across the question, What is the name of the novelist whose writing of a story has encouraged the breaking open of cases in our museums?

I might suggest Mr. Conan Doyle, who wrote a story dealing with an Oriental Professor and the theft of an Eastern jewel from a case in the British Museum. This short story appeared in the *Strand Magazine*. I can't tell the month, but, as far as my treacherous memory will aid me, I believe it was about a year ago.—I am, &c.,

SUTHERLAND WILSON.

Lancaster College, West Norwood, S.E.:

May 6, 1900.

The Missing Word.

SIR,—The word (for "citizen of the British Empire") is badly wanted; but if "Englander" and "Briton" will not do, it follows *a fortiori* that no other word of local derivation will do. Neither will any word derived from "Empire." *Imperium et libertas* is a splendid motto, but the *imperium* and its derivatives, without the *libertas*, suggest chiefly two-headed eagles, conscript armies, and autocrats. Let us therefore still keep the two; let the Empire still be the Empire; but let its parts be called Freelands, and the inhabitants thereof Freelanders. If we have taught the world anything, it is surely the use of freedom. Maximum of consent and participation, minimum of compulsion, interference, and disability—these have been the watchwords of the growing Empire, and they are the only ones which can ensure its permanence. Let us now perpetuate them in a living name. Incidentally, too, this name might serve to remind a portion of the foreign world that a free land is not necessarily a republic, and *vice versa*.—I am, &c.,

R. J. LLOYD.

University College, Liverpool: May 5, 1900.

New Books Received.

[These notes on some of the New Books of the week are preliminary to Reviews that may follow.]

GIBBON'S DECLINE AND FALL OF THE
ROMAN EMPIRE.

EDITED BY J. B. BURY.

This is a great piece of editing, considered merely in its quantity of research and annotation. It is obvious that Gibbon's history requires, and may yet require, the assistance of later scholars to make it accurate. Gibbon's accuracy was wonderful, but it was relative to his opportunities. As Mr. Bury says: "The discovery of new materials, the researches of numerous scholars, in the course of a hundred years, have not only added to our knowledge of facts, but have modified and upset conclusions which Gibbon, with his materials, was justified in drawing." The issue of this edition, now completed, is a literary event of no small importance. (Methuen. 7 vols., each 8s. 6d.)

THE LIFE OF LIVES.

BY F. W. FARRAR.

Dean Farrar introduces his new work on the Life in these words: "Twenty-six years ago I was led by 'God's unseen Providence, which men nickname Chance,' to write a Life of Christ. . . . The object of the present book is different. It deals with questions of high importance which the Gospels suggest, and aims at deepening the faith and brightening the hope in Christ of all who read it honestly. *Sis sus, sis Divus, sum Caltha, et non tibi spiro.*" Among the many subjects dealt with are these: "The Unique Supremacy of Jesus," "Lessons of the Unrecorded Jesus," "John the Baptist," "The Form of Christ's Teaching," "The Apostles," "Gethsemane," &c., &c. (Cassell.)

THE POETICAL WORKS OF
MATHILDE BLIND.

EDITED BY
ARTHUR SYMONS.

It will be remembered that Mr. Symons put forth in 1897 a selection from Mathilde Blind's poetry, with an appreciation. He now gives us a complete collected edition of her poems, and his appreciation disappears (we regret) in favour of a short preface. However, Dr. Richard Garnett supplies a memoir, in which he gives the simple facts of Mathilde Blind's life, and sums up: "Mathilde Blind would have been more popular if she had been less ardent and more conciliating; she would have been a more accomplished writer if the passion for essential truth had not made her unduly indifferent to artistic finish; but after every allowance has been made, her poetry remains noble in execution as in aspiration, and her character was even more noble than her poetry." (Unwin. 7s. 6d.)

FOUR MONTHS BESIEGED.

BY H. H. G. PEARSE.

Mr. Pearse represented the *Daily News* in Ladysmith during its siege. Many of his letters never reached his paper, being taken from native runners or blue-pencilled by the censor. Two or three letters did appear, but the rest of the book is new. Mr. Nevinnson's book, *Ladysmith: the Diary of a Siege* (Methuen), appears simultaneously. (Macmillan. 6s.)

1815: WATERLOO.

BY HENRY HOUSSAYE.

This is the French standard work on Waterloo, and its name is familiar in every discussion of Wellington's victory. An English translation was, therefore, much to be desired, and the present version will meet the want. It is made from the thirty-first French edition of Houssaye's great work by the author's permission. A short critical introduction would, we think, have been appreciated by most readers. (Black. 10s. net.)

* * * Owing to pressure on our space, our further list of books received is held over.

Our Weekly Competition.

Result of No. 33 (New Series).

THE Pickwickian exercise which we set last week has not tempted a great many competitors. We think that Mr. Lewis Longfield, of 1, Thyra-villas, Ramsgate, has probably entered into Mr. Pickwick's mind, and divined his language more closely than the other competitors. To Mr. Longfield, therefore, a cheque for one guinea has been sent. Mr. Longfield's reply is as follows:

In propounding my somewhat startling Tittlebatian theory I entertain some misgivings as to the reception of the fruit of my unwearied researches. Every novel invention, even where destined to revolutionise existing systems, meets unvarying opposition. It is a small thing to say that the theory of tittlebats has from time immemorial been the fulcrum of the see-saw of scientific discussion. I protest against the commonly accepted solution that the tittlebat originated from the eggs of a little bat, which fell into and were hatched in a pond, and I defy the author of that theory to prove that even a big bat has ever laid a single egg! (Great applause.) I have no doubt that "tittle" is but a dialectal variation of "stickle" or "prickle"; moreover, I am assured that "bat" is merely a corruption of "back." Children and yokels will soon outrage language if the literary policeman is off his beat! (Protracted cheers.) Now the tittlebat possesses a dorsal fin spiked with "prickles." I believe then, nay, I assert, that "tittlebat" is but a demoralised form of "stickleback." (Sensation.) I now call the attention of this learned house to the fact that the perch, a fish vastly eulogised by one Izaak Walton, possesses a dorsal fin, remarkable chiefly for its stickley prickles. Research shows that it frequents the deeper waters, whereas the shallows are the haunt of the subject of our discussion. My theory may be summed up in the phrase, "adaptation to circumstance," and I believe that it establishes a new law which deprives the Perch of any other appellation than that of the Greater Tittlebat! (Vociferous cheers wherein the great man's concluding words were whirled away in the current of applause, thus constituting a loss irreparable both to the scientific world and to mankind at large.)

Among the other replies is this:

What does Izaak Walton say on the momentous subject of tittlebats, or, as he calls them, sticklebags? The kindly, cold-blooded fisherman regards this most interesting of fishes merely as a bait merely as a substitute for minnows. To use his own words: "I know not where he dwells in winter, or what he is good for in summer, but only to make sport for boys and women-anglers [!], and to feed other fish that be fish of prey, as trouts in particular, who will bite at him as at a penk." Thus does man subvert all nature to his own uses: the sun to light his day, the moon (intermittently) to illumine his night, and the gallant, invincible little tittlebat to serve him as bait for "trouts"! But what is the true mission in life of this tiny warrior? From our childhood upwards we have observed his swift, subtle movements, the iridescent, plated armour he bears on his sides, and have felt the formidable spines with which his lower and upper surfaces are protected. Is a creature so panoplied, so swift and eager of movement, created for no other purpose than to be the food of sleek, smug, self-satisfied trout? You will find the answer to this question—if I may use the expression—in his mouth. He is not only the most warlike, but the most voracious of fishes. His is the predatory mission to keep down the undue growth of the piscine race by devouring their spawn. But for him perch and trout might wax and grow till the Hampstead ponds were filled with huge, wallowing behemoths, and the smooth surface of the Serpentine were stirred by the fins of pike as long and lithe as the sharks of Eastern seas.

[F. L. A., Ealing.]

Other replies received from: H. W. D., London; C. G., Hampstead; W. A. B., London; A. E. W., Inverness; M. M., Ramsgate; F. C.; H. F. H., Nottingham; H. G. P., Stafford; A. W., London; G. W. C., Grimsby; F. S., Cambridge.

Competition No. 34 (New Series).

WE offer a prize of ONE GUINEA for the best description of a motor-car by Dr. Johnson. Competitors are to assume that Dr. Johnson met a motor-car, proceeding at full speed, for the first time in a rural walk—say, for instance, during his tour in Scotland, and afterwards gave his opinion of it in his *Visit to the Hebrides*. Not to exceed 150 words.

RULES.

Answers, addressed "Literary Competition, THE ACADEMY, 43, Chancery-lane, W.C.," must reach us not later than the first post of Tuesday, May 15. Each answer must be accompanied by the coupon to be found in the third column of p. 416, or it cannot enter into competition. Competitors sending more than one attempt at solution must accompany each attempt with a separate coupon; otherwise the first only will be considered. We cannot consider anonymous answers.

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